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MAGIC IN GREEK AND LATIN LITERATURE

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MAGIC IN GREEK & LATIN LITERATURE

By J. E. LOWE, M.A.

EAST LONDON COLLEGE (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

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PREFACE

THIS book does not attempt to deal with magic as an art: it merely aims at presenting in popular form the chief accounts of magical practices to be found recorded in the writings of ancient Greek and Roman authors. Numerous references are given throughout, in the hope that scholars who wish to pursue the subject further, and in greater detail, may derive benefit therefrom; on the other hand, it is hoped that the book will appeal to a wider public also, and for that reason those usages of ancient magicians which were of an objectionable character have been purposely omitted, as unsuitable for general reading.

Wherever possible I have inserted in footnotes to the text my acknowledgments to those authors whose works I have consulted or from whom I have quoted. I wish, however, to express my especial indebtedness to Mr. Joseph J. Mooney's excursus, *Old Roman Magic*, and my thanks to him and the publishers, Messrs. Cornish Bros. Ltd., of Birmingham, for permission to quote extensively from this most useful work; and, further, my thanks to the editors of the Loeb Classical

Library for their permission to make use of translations from this series.

The picture on the cover, representing Medea's Preparations for the Boiling of Pelias, is reproduced from Gerhard, *Auserlesene Vasenbilder* by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. in their edition of Euripides' *Medea* in Elementary Classics, and is here used by their kind permission.

J. E. LOWE.

LONDON, 1929.

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MAGIC IN GREEK AND LATIN LITERATURE

I

DEVELOPMENT OF MAGIC

MANY definitions of the word "magic" have been attempted: none, perhaps, is wholly satisfactory. The word connotes so much, includes so much, the boundary line between it and religion is so hazy and indefinable, that it is almost impossible to tie it down and restrict it to the narrow limits of some neat turn of phrase that will hit it off and have done with it. There is a magic in the very word itself: it winks at one, and dances away, like some elusive sprite; it conjures up pictures of an infinite variety, from the witch of Endor to Maskelyne and Devant; by turns it is black or white, cruel or harmless, deadly serious or a glorious joke. Primitive magic, however, was more often black than white, and, therefore, more often of the deadly serious kind. All magic that really is magic, and not mere make-believe, deals with the supernatural, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, with the subnatural. Many people there are who go through life blind and deaf to any other world than that in which their body lives and moves; for others the veil between this world and another is so unsubstantial that sights and sounds, invisible and inaudible to the average person, are con-

tinually before their eyes and in their ears. Nobody, for example, who has given any serious attention to the so-called modern cult of spiritualism, really as old as the proverbial hills themselves, insists that it deals wholly in fraud and chicanery. The spirit world is an established fact for all intelligent people; the desirability of communicating with it, or the methods by which such communications should be effected, is another matter. But a twentieth-century Baker Street *séance* aims at doing no more than Erichtho is supposed to have achieved in the first century B.C., and employs far less direct and simple methods.

Magic, we may say roughly, is an attempt to subvert natural phenomena by super- or sub-natural means—that is, by the coercion of normally superior powers. "It is now recognised," says Professor Halliday,[1] "by the majority of ethnologists that magical action of necessity implies the setting in motion of some non-natural power, and that even in its most formal development it is never the logical connection of cause and effect which makes its rites efficacious, but the power of the magician, or that inherent in the rites or formulæ, in virtue of their abnormal character."

Mr. Warde Fowler[2] says: "By active or positive magic we are to understand the exercise of a mysterious mechanical power by an individual on man, spirit or deity, to enforce a certain result. In magic there is no propitiation, no prayer. 'He who performs a purely magical act,' says Dr. Westermarck,[3] 'utilises such me-

[1] *Greek Divination*, ch. ii., pp. 10, 11.
[2] *Roman Religious Experience*, Lect. III., p. 47.
[3] *Origin of Moral Ideas*, ii. 584.

chanical power without making any appeal at all to the will of a supernatural being.' Religion, on the other hand, is an attitude of regard and dependence; in a religious stage man feels himself in the hands of a supernatural power with whom he desires to be in right relation."

Such a statement, however, that in magic there is no propitiation, no prayer, seems to need some qualification. According to Andrew Lang, "men had magic before they had religion and only invented gods because they found that magic did not work." If this is true, the fact that magic preceded belief in the gods precludes any possibility of prayer being employed by primitive magicians. So little, however, can even be conjectured about man in his primitive state that it is impossible to assert with confidence that either religion or magic was first in the field. In modern cases, at any rate, religious belief precedes the use of magic, and it is only when that belief breaks down that recourse is had to the forbidden ways of sorcery and witchcraft. It is not, as a rule, the earnest church-goer, least of all the so-called atheist, who visits Bond Street crystal-gazers and palmists; but men or women whose belief in the religion in which they have been reared has broken down, yet in their hearts (rather than their minds) still yearn after some supernatural peg on which to hang the remnants of their faith, or seek to guide their life by the means of some power other than human. But in the case of Greek and Roman magic, it is difficult to believe that the numerous invocations addressed to Hecate, to Night, to the gods below, and to other deities, by such notable witches as Medea

and Erichtho, had no counterpart at all in primitive practice. The truth, however, would seem to be, that in magic the appeal to the deity is a personal and unofficial one, not approved by any guiding or definitive body, civil or religious. Official Greek and Roman religion paid worship to the gods of the heavens; magicians addressed their prayers to the nether gods. But time and again at the bottom of magic is the suggestion of despair: the orthodox gods are useless, they will not hear: recourse must be had to some more drastic way of obtaining assistance.

In any case, once both religion and the use of magic were established, they grew up side by side, intertwined and in conflict;[1] yet often magic was so suffused by the idea that the magician depended on some power higher than himself that his act became implicitly religious.

"The sin of witchcraft," says Lang,[2] "is as the sin of rebellion. The idea which inspires this text is probably that a person who seeks to obtain his ends by witchcraft is rebelling against the deity or deities through whom alone these ends should be sought. Witchcraft is also an insult and injury to the official priests, who regard the witch as the surgeon regards the bone-setter, or as the geologist regards the 'dowser' or water-finder who uses the divining rod."

Lang divides magic into two classes: first, that used by people who think that things accidentally like one another influence one another. For example, a stone resembling a duck would portend good duck-shooting if

[1] "Inter omnes constat quam angustissime magiam cohærere cum religione" (L. Fahz, *De poet. Rom. doc. mag.*, ch. i.).

[2] Andrew Lang, *Magic and Religion*, p. 46.

picked up and carried about. In the same way the part influences the whole: by burning a person's hair a fever can be brought upon his whole body. All magic of this kind is performed by means of material objects, such as hair, wood, stones, etc., some of which have to have spells cast over them before they become efficacious. "It really does produce effects," says Mr. Lang, "by suggestion: a man dies and a woman is won, if they know that magic is being worked to kill or woo." The second class of magic is the coercion of the gods, by means of spells, to do the will of the magician. "This magic," continues Mr. Lang, "involves itself in religion when the magical ceremonies are, so to speak, only symbolic prayers expressed in a kind of sign-language. But if the idea is to put constraint by spells on a god or spirit, then the intention is magical and rebellious. Though the official priest of a savage god may use magic in his appeal to that deity, he is not a wizard. It is the unofficial practitioner who is a witch, just as the unqualified medical practitioner is a quack."

A magician must have belief in his own powers, or he has no power. Plato says that those who dare to do injury by using spells or incantations are encouraged to do so by the belief that it is in their power to do so, (*possunt quia posse videntur*), and their victims believe that they are injured because they believe in the power of the witch or magician to injure them. According to St. Augustine, it is the desire of knowing and experimenting in all directions that gives rise to the practice of magic: "Magicas artes non utrique nisi pro felicitate terrena vel dominabili curiositate conquirunt."[1]

[1] Ep. 138 *ad* Marcell.

Apuleius, who was accused in the second century A.D. of having married a rich wife by magical means, asks in his defence how the prosecutor would define a magician.[1] He endeavours to show that the word *magus*[2] is the Persian term for a priest, and that priest and magician are really one and the same thing. He declares that magic is an art acceptable to the gods, full of knowledge, of worship and prayer, of piety and of wisdom. According to Pliny,[3] magic first originated in the art of medicine, or wormed itself into society, under the pretext of promoting health, as a higher and holier branch of that art. Magic, according to Eudoxus, seems to have originated in Persia under Zoroaster, who flourished some six thousand years before Plato's death. Hermippus, however, says that Agonaces was Zoroaster's master, and that he lived five thousand years before the Trojan war. Names only have come down to us, such as Apusorus and Zaratus of Media, Marmarus and Arabantiphocus of Babylonia, and Tarmoendas of Assyria; but no memorials are extant. While the *Iliad* contains not a single reference to magical practices, the *Odyssey* is full of them.[4]

"No one has told us," says Pliny,[5] "how the art of

[1] Apul., *Apol.*, xxv.

[2] "The name *magus* (old Persian *magu-s*), applied to all workers of miracles, strictly designates the priests of Mazdeism, and well-attested tradition made certain Persians the inventors of genuine magic, the magic which the Middle Ages styled black art" (Cumont, *Les Religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, p. 227, quoted by H. E. Butler, Apul., *Apol.* xxv. 25). "In ordinary parlance μάγος, γόης, ἐπῳδός, were synonymous in scorn (*cf.* Æschin, lxxiii. 13; Eurip., *Bacch.*, 227; Hippol., 1035), suggesting 'sorcerer,' 'quack,' 'wizard,' 'juggler,' 'charlatan'" (W. Headlam, *Class. Rev.*, XVI., p. 55).

[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxx. 1.

[4] One of the arguments in favour of a different authorship.

[5] *Loc. cit.*

sorcery reached Telmessus, a city devoted to all the services of religion, or at what period it came over and reached the matrons of Thessaly. In the days of the Trojan war, Thessaly still contended with such remedies as she owed to the skill of Chiron, and her only lightnings were those hurled by Mars." Pliny further expresses surprise that Thessaly should be the home of witches, and would have supposed rather that Orpheus would have been the first to introduce into a country so near his own certain magic superstitions based on the practice of medicine. The fact, however, that Thrace was then a total stranger to magic precludes any possibility of such a supposition. Pliny tells us that the first writings on magic were the work of Osthanes, who accompanied Xerxes on his expedition against Greece. "He first disseminated the germs of this monstrous art, and tainted therewith all the parts of the world through which the Persians passed." According to Pliny, also, magic and medicine developed simultaneously, magic at the hands of Democritus, and medicine through Hippocrates, about the period of the Peloponnesian war.[1]

Various systems of magic passed from Higher Asia to Egypt, while the arts of magic were always connected and inseparably bound up with the traditions of

[1] Most of the great philosophers and sages of antiquity came to be regarded by posterity as magicians. Orpheus, the legendary founder of the Orphic mysteries, Empedocles of Agrigentum, Pythagoras, even Plato himself (*cf.* Pliny, xxx. 9, and Diog. Laert., iii. 7) were looked upon as wizards. Moses, again, appears as a magician in early times, and Strabo (xvi. 2, 39) classes him with magicians of different nations. A magical book called *The Sword of Moses* still exists. In the Koran he is referred to as a wise magician, and is often spoken of in the papyri as such (*vide* Apul., *Apol.*, ed. by H. E. Butler, p. 162, note on ch. xc., 23).

Pontus. Colchis, Medea, Iberia, Assyria, and Chaldea all gave their names to magic herbs.[1]

The Thessalians[2] are mentioned as the most diligent exercisers of magic, under the form of sorcery, after the invasion of the Persians. The Thessalian sorceresses became proverbial for their attempts to draw down the moon from the sky.[3] The land itself was rich in herbs and plants which were used for spells and incantations.[4] The residence of Persians in Thessaly was of long duration, and many traditions, as for instance that of the physician Chiron, the Centaur, may be traced to the coarser Thessalian mind. In Suidas a reference is made to the fact that Medea let fall magic herbs in a casket in the land of Thessaly in the course of her journey through the air. In Italy magic is said to have been cultivated by Numa at the building of Rome. "When the Aventine hill," says Plutarch,[5] "was not yet part of the city . . . but abounded in springs and shady dells, two demigods, Picus and Faunus, made it their haunt. . . . They are said to have used powerful drugs and practised clever incantations. . . . These demigods Numa is said to have caught by mixing wine and honey with the water of the spring from which they were wont to drink.

[1] "Iolcos atque Iberia venenorum ferax" (Hor., *Epod.*, 5, 21; *cf. Od.* II. xiii. 8., *Ep.* xvii. 35) (*Ibid.*, 17, 35.) "κακὰ φάρμακα φαμὶ φυλασσειν 'Ασσυρίω, δέσποινα, παρὰ ξείνοιο μαθοῖσα" (Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 162, 3).

[2] "Thessaliæ urbes, quarum cognomen diu obtinuit magia" (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxx. 1; *cf.* Hor., *Od.* I. xxvii. 21).

[3] "Quæ sidera excantata voce Thessala lunamque cœlo deripit" (Hor., *Ep.*, v. 45).

[4] "Media Thessaliæ loca, quæ artis magicæ nativæ cantamina totius orbis consono ore celebratur" (Apuleius, *Met.*, 2, 114; *cf.* Lucan, vi. 440).

[5] Plut., *Life of Numa*, xv. 3-6 (translated by B. Perrin, Loeb Classical Library).

When captured, they dropped their forms and assumed many different shapes, presenting hideous and dreadful appearances. But when they perceived that they were fast caught and could not escape, they foretold to Numa many things that would come to pass, and taught him, besides, the charm against thunder and lightning, which is still practised with onions, hair, and sprats. Some, however, say that it was not the imps themselves who imparted the charm, but that they called Jupiter down from heaven by their magic,[1] and that this deity angrily told Numa that he must charm thunder and lightning with *heads*. 'Of onions?' asked Numa, filling out the phrase. 'Of men,' said Jupiter. Thereupon Numa, trying once more to avert the horror of the prescription, asked, 'With hair?' 'Nay,' answered Jupiter, 'with living'—'sprats?' added Numa, as he had been taught by Egeria to say. Then the god returned to heaven in a gracious mood, and the place was called Ilicium from this circumstance; and that is the way the charm was perfected. These stories, fabulous and ridiculous as they are, show us the attitude which men of that time took towards the gods."

According to historical records, magic was transferred

[1] *Cf.* Livy, i. 20: "Ad ea elicienda ex mentibus divinis Jovi Elicio aram in Aventino dicavit, deumque consuluit auguriis, quæ suscipienda essent." *Cf.* Ovid, *Fast.*, iii. 321:

"Juppiter huc veniet valida deductus ab arte,
Nubila promissi Styx mihi testis erit.
Emissi quid agant laqueis, quid carmina dicant,
Quaque trahant superis sedibus arte Jovem,
Scire nefas homini. Nobis concessa canentur,
Quæque pio dici vatis ab ore licet.
Eliciunt cælo te, Juppiter; unde minores
Nunc quoque te celebrant, Eliciumque vocant."

from the East to the West, that is to Europe. It is also probable that philosophy came from the same source. The foreign origin of demonology can be traced thence from the evidence of ancient writers: εἴτε μάγων τῶν περὶ Σωροάστρην ὁ λόγος οὗτος, εἴτε Θράκιος ἀπ' Ὀρφέως, εἴτ' Αἰγύπτιος ἢ Φρύγιος.[1] It is far different, however, with sorcery. The idea of it as a γοητεία is only found at a later period, after the separation of philosophy and religion had begun. The definition of sorcery is not found in Plato[2] or Cicero or in other writers, or in the lexicographers under the head of μαγία or γοητεία, and can be found only by the comparison of various accounts of its exercise given by ancient writers, and their views on the subject.

The idea of magic as sorcery is confused by the representation of Fate. Apuleius, in his *Apologia*, says, "Fato a quo multum magia remota est, vel potius omnino sublata. Quæ enim relinquitur vis cantaminibus et veneficiis, si fatum rei cujusque, veluti violentissimus torrens, neque retineri potest, neque impelli?" Since sorcery and fate are opposed to each other, it is easier for sorcery to govern the diminished power of the gods—that is, the power which is subject to the Stygian Fates:

> "Omne nefas superi prima jam voce precantis
> Concedunt, carmenque timent audire secundum."[3]

Apuleius speaks of the "inexpugnabilis magicæ disciplinæ potestas," and the "cæca numinum coactorum

[1] Plutarch *de defectu ovar.* c. 10.

[2] Plato, *Rep.*, 364B-365A, speaks of quacks and soothsayers who went round to the houses of the rich, alleging power bestowed by heaven to procure, by sacrifices and incantations, the healing of sins, or the destruction of enemies, at small expense.

[3] Lucan, vi. 527; *cf.* "ibi plurima surgunt/vim factura deis" (*Ibid.*, 440).

violentia." This belief in being able to compel the gods to appear was much developed in the early ages of Christianity, and the gods were summoned to earth by the use of certain formulæ.

"Mythology," says Ennemoser,[1] "with its magical meaning, was long perfected before the γοητεία arose like a misgrowth. The belief in secret revelations, natural powers and miraculous cures certainly always existed among the Greeks; but not belief in sorcery. Wachsmuth says: 'The conception of a power which is capable of influencing the course of nature, and by which men may even compel the gods, is un-Grecian. Each unusual knowledge, each higher power, belongs to the gods, and can only be practised by their aid; the constitution of the world is still so infantine that there remains no room for men when the gods exert their influence on a large scale. . . .' As light precedes the shadow, magic precedes sorcery—the abuse proceeds from the use; . . . without the earlier magic of instructive clairvoyance, and the acting vitality of the mind, sorcery would not have been discovered."

There are references which lead us to believe that the introduction of magic into Italy took place at an early date. The Twelve Tables contained two laws against the use of spells;[2] Lucius Piso, in the first book of his *Annals*, tells us that King Tullus Hostilius, while attempting to bring down Jupiter from heaven by means similar to those employed by Numa, was struck by lightning because he had not followed certain forms in the sacrifice with proper exactness;[3] and Verrius Flac-

[1] Ennemoser, *Hist. of Magic*, translated by W. Howitt, p. 349.
[2] *Vide infra*, p. 20. [3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 4.

cus cites authors to show that, on the occasion of a siege, it was the custom of the Roman priests to call forth the tutelary divinity of the besieged town, and to promise him the same rites, or even a higher form of worship, at Rome. Pliny is of the opinion that this is the reason why the name of the guardian deity of Rome was so carefully concealed, lest any of her enemies should retaliate upon her in like manner.[1]

In the year 215 B.C. all books on divination and all formulæ connected with special prayers were ordered to be brought to the prætor; and in 97 B.C. a law was passed by the senate, in the consulship of Cn. Cornelius Lentulus and P. Licinius Crassus, forbidding the offering of human sacrifices.[2] As this grim rite formed the central part of the magician's art,[3] magic ceased to be practised in public. That it continued to have a secret vogue is proved by the decree of the senate issued in A.D. 16 banishing all astrologers and magicians from Italy. Two suffered the extreme penalty, Lucius Pituanus being hurled from the Tarpeian rock, and Publius Marcius being stripped and lashed to death outside the Esquiline Gate.[4]

Again, although the actual charge against Apuleius of Madaura was almost certainly false, it is not unlikely that he was well versed in the practice of magic, and he was regarded as a wizard by St. Augustine,[5] who even

[1] Pliny, *loc. cit.*

[2] Livy, xxv. 1.

[3] Servius on Virg., *Æn.*, vi. 107: "Necromantia vel sciomantia sine occisione hominis non fiebat." *Cf.* Cic. *in Vatin.* 14: "Volo ut mihi respondeas tu . . . quæ te tanta pravitas mentis tenuerit, qui tantus furor, ut cum inaudita ac nefaria sacra susceperis, cum inferorum animas elicere, cum puerorum extis deos Manes mactare soleas." *Cf.* Lucan, vi. 710 *sq.*

[4] Tac., *Ann.*, ii. 32.

[5] Aug., *Epist.*, 136.

suggests that Apuleius himself was transformed, like the hero of his *Metamorphoses*, into an ass.[1]
Pliny adds,[2] "We may rest fully assured that magic is a thing detestable in itself. Frivolous and lying as it is, it still bears some shadow of truth in it; though reflected, in reality, by the practices of those who study the arts of secret poisoning, and not the pursuits of magic."

[1] Aug., *Civ. Dei*, xviii. 18: "Sicut Apuleius in libris, quos Asini Aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipse accidisse ut . . . asinus fieret, aut indicavit aut finxit."
[2] *Nat. Hist.*, xxx. 6.

II

MAGIC IN PRACTICE[1]

1. Ceremonies.—The ceremonies used by people who practised magic were numerous; but for the most part some certain recognised forms of ritual prevailed everywhere. As a rule the rites were conducted by night; the witch or magician was barefoot, with hair unbound and flowing, and was clad in a loose black garment without a girdle :[2] in fact, there must be no constriction anywhere,[3] not so much as a ring on the finger. Very seldom were the performers of the ceremonies naked. Even at the Lupercalia[4] the young men who officiated covered their bodies with goat skins. Pliny, however, mentions that those who conducted the rite to Apollo were naked.[5]

In the performance of magic rites great stress is laid on the turning away of the head during the proceedings. In the offering to the Furies,[6] the rule is "Depart, and

[1] For this chapter I am indebted chiefly to J. J. Mooney's excursus *Old Roman Magic*, published by Messrs. Cornish Bros., Ltd., 1919.

[2] "Egreditur tectis vestes induta recinctas,
Nuda pedem, nudos umeris infusa capillos." (Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 182.)
"Per tumulos errat passis discincta capillis." (Ovid., *Her.*, vi. 89.)
"Vidi egomet nigra succinctam vadere palla
Canidiam, pedibus nudis passoque capillo." (Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 23 *sq.*)
"Crine dato passim plantisque ex more solutis." (Stat., *Theb.*, ix. 572.

[3] "Habent gemini vincula nulla pedes." (Ovid, *Fast.*, v. 432.)
"Unum exuta pedem vinclis, in veste recincta." (Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 518.

[4] Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 267-302.

[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxvi. 9, 60.

[6] Soph., *Œd. Col.*, 490.

look not behind." When Deucalion repeopled the world after the destruction of the human race by the flood,[1] he was told to throw the stones backwards over his head. When Odysseus receives the magic scarf from the goddess Leucothea, she bids him cast it into the wine-coloured sea, when he has no further use for it, and turn away as he throws it.[2] The Roman laying ghosts at the festival of the Lemuria spat the beans out of his mouth without looking behind him,[3] while the throwing of ashes over one's head was another common practice.[4]

2. INCANTATIONS.—Incantations were employed during the performance of a magic rite—that is to say, invocations in set form, addressed to some deity or deities of the nether world—and were accompanied by the sacrifice of some victim and the burning of incense.[5] These incantations were made in a sort of barking howl, like the cry of a dog or wolf, and were usually unintelligible to the uninitiated.[6]

The sons of Autolycus, when Odysseus was wounded in a boar fight, bound up his wound, and staunched the blood with an incantation.[7]

[1] *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, i. 370-389.
[2] Hom., *Od.*, v. 349 *sqq.*
[3] Ovid, *Fast.*, v. 437 *sqq.*; *vide infra*, p. 18.
[4] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 103; *cf.* Nem., *Buc.*, iv. 65.
[5] "Pullam divellere mordicas agnam/cæperunt" (Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 27); *cf.* Tib. i. 2, 62.
[6] "Iam tenet infernas magico stridore catervas" (Tib., i. 2, 47).
"Dissona et humanæ multum discordia linguæ
Latratus habet illa canum gemitumque luporum" (Lucan, vi. 687 *sq.*).
"Magicis Hecaten ululatibus ovat" (Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 405; *cf.* vii., 190 *sq.*).
[7] Hom., *Od.*, xix. 457: ἐπαοιδῇ δ' αἷμα κελαινὸν ἔσχεθον; *cf.* Pind., *P.*, iv. 217: λιτάς τε ἐπαοιδὰς ἐκδιδάσκησεν σοφὸν Αἰσονίδαν. Æsch., *Eum.*, 649; Hdt., i. 132; Plat., *Legg.*, 903 B.

Charms and spells were always used in set form, and were thought to possess some occult power or influence over the gods of the underworld, to coerce them into complying with the desires of the spell-user. Some of these spells have been preserved, but they are mostly mere nonsense rhymes, or simply a confused jumble of letters or words, rather after the style of children's 'counting-out' rhymes to-day, such as "Eena deena dinah doh." Cato[1] tells us that if a bone is dislocated, the use of the following charm will cure it. First one must take a green reed, four or five feet long, cut it in half and get two people to hold the pieces against one's hips. Then one chants:

"In Alio. S. F. Motas Væta,
Daries Dardaries Astataries Dissunapiter."

This charm must be repeated until the free ends of the reed have been brought slowly together in front. In the meantime a knife must be waved above the reeds, and when they come together, they must be seized in one's hand and cut right and left. Then the pieces are to be bound round the fractured or dislocated bone, and a cure will be effected. The incantation, however, must be repeated continually, or in place of it the following:

"Huat Hanat Huat
Ista Pista Sista
Domiabo Damnaustra."

Several leaden tablets have been discovered inscribed with magic formulæ. The following account of one such tablet discovered in one of the burying places of

[1] *De Re Rustica*, clx.

the imperial officials at Carthage is given in Schreiber's *Atlas of Classical Antiquities*.[1] "The tablet is bordered by Greek magic letters, arranged arbitrarily. The centre is occupied by a long oval object. Below this are nine dots between ten lines. Then follows a jargon of names in Greek, followed by an inscription in Latin:—

IXCITO (TE)/DEMON· QUI (H)IC·CONVER/SANS TRADO TIBIOS/EQUOS· UT DETENEAS/ILLOS·ET·IMPLICENTUR/(N)EC SE MOVERE POSSINT =
"Excito (te) demon qui (h)ic (?) conversans trado tibi (h)os equos ut detineas illos et implicentur (n)ec se movere possint."

The inscription shows that the curse was intended to light on the thirty-two horses named at the side (Sidereus, Igneus, etc.). As Bücheler has pointed out,[2] the oval object represents the circus, the dots and lines the *carceres* and chariots. As there are nine dots, the thirty-two horses belong to the eight chariots competing against the writer's favourite team. Such *maleficia agitatorum* were the subject of legislation under the later empire."

We read in Pliny[3] that in his day people believed that a runaway slave who had not yet escaped from the city could be arrested by a spell chanted by the Vestal Virgins. "Vestales nostras hodie credimus nondum egressa urbe mancipia fugitiva retinere in loco precationibus." A *precatio* was probably, originally at any rate, a genuine spell, of the same kind as others in use in private life, and it implies the belief in some magic power inherent in the Vestal Virgins, of whom we read that if

[1] *Vide* pp. 172, 174.
[2] *Rheinisches Mus.*, 1886, p. 160.
[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 13.

they met a condemned criminal, who was being led off to punishment, they could secure his release.[1]

3. Festivals.—The Lupercalia was a feast which occurred on February 15th. Two young men, called Luperci, clad in the skins of the victims which were sacrificed at the altars, and which were invariably goats, ran round the foot of the Palatine Hill, striking all the women they met, or who offered themselves for the purpose, with straps made of skin also taken from the hides of the slaughtered victims.[2] The object of this performance was to promote fertility, for they believed that every woman struck by the Luperci with their goat-skin straps was cured of barrenness. "Some potency was believed to work in the act of striking, though apparently without a spoken spell or *carmen*, such as usually accompanies acts of this kind; and this part of the rite, grotesque though it was, was allowed to survive by the graver religious authorities who drew up the calendar of religious festivals."[3]

The Lemuria was a festival held on the 9th of May for the exorcising of ghosts.[4] The father of the family would rise at midnight, and with bare feet, after bathing his hands in holy water, would walk through the house softly snapping his fingers and thumbs to keep off the ghosts. In his mouth he had black beans, which he spat out as he walked, looking the other way, and chanting, "These I offer; with these I redeem me and mine." Nine times he would repeat these words without looking

[1] *Vide* W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Religious Experience*, Lecture III., p. 53.
[2] Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 425 *sqq.*; Plut., *Rom.*, 21; *Cæs.*, 61; *Paul.*, 57; Liv., fragm. 12 (Madvig); Serv. on *Æn.*, viii. 343.
[3] W. Warde Fowler, *Rom. Rel. Ex.*, p. 54.
[4] Ovid, *Fast.*, v. 429.

round; then would come the ghosts behind him, hungry and bloodless, snatching at the beans and devouring them. When he had passed through every corridor, he bathed again, and striking a gong, recited nine times the formula "Manes exite paterni" ("Ye ghosts of my ancestors, go hence"). Then only was he permitted to look round, and thus the ceremony came to an end.

Another curious little ceremony in use at Rome, which took place every year on May 15th, was the casting into the River Tiber, from the *pons sublicius*, twenty-four or twenty-seven puppets made of straw.[1] The ceremony was performed by the Vestal Virgins in the presence of the magistrates and pontifices. "The actual immersion of the puppets is the survival of a primitive piece of sympathetic magic, the object being possibly to secure rain."[2]

At the Compitalia, Paganalia and *feriæ Latinæ* we are told that small images of the human figure, or masks, or sometimes round balls (*pilæ*), were hung up on trees or doorways and left to swing in the wind. At the Compitalia the images were called *maniæ*. The meaning of this word is unknown, but as the figures were suspended from trees at the various cross-roads at this festival, where were the shrines of the Lares Compitales, the name Mania was given to a goddess said to be the Mother of the Lares. At the Paganalia, *oscilla*,[3] little faces of Bacchus, were hung from the trees, that as they swung in the wind they might spread fertility every way over the fields.

[1] These puppets were called *argei*, a fact which suggests a Greek origin.
[2] W. Warde Fowler, *Rom. Rel. Ex.*, p. 54.
[3] Virg., *Georg.*, ii. 389.

Pausanias tells us[1] that it was the custom to throw barley loaves into the water of Ino at Epidauros Limera; if the loaves sank to the bottom, it was a good omen for the person who threw them in; but if they floated up to the surface again, it was a bad omen. The same kind of divination was practised at Etna, offerings being hurled into the crater. The retention of the offerings was a good sign, the rejection a bad one.[2]

4. Spells.—That spells were in common use at Rome, and in Italy generally, is established by the fact that there was a law to punish those who employed them. Pliny gives us the words from the XII Tables: "qui fruges excantasset." Servius, commenting on Virgil's eighth Eclogue, "atque satas alio vidi traducere messes,"[3] writes, "magicis quibusdam artibus hoc fiebat, unde est in XII Tabb. 'Neve alienam segetem pellexeris.'" These last words, however, are probably not quoted exactly from the ancient text, as is shown by the verb being put in the second person singular; but they help to show that a hostile spell of this kind must have been in frequent use. Some belief there must have been that the spirit, life, or fructifying power of one's neighbour's crops could be charmed away and transferred to one's own fields.[4] In support of this we find in St. Augustine,[5] after a quotation of the above-mentioned passage from the eighth Eclogue, the following remark: "Eo quod hac pestifera sceleratque doctrina fructus alieni in alias terras transferri perhibentur, nonne in XII

[1] Paus., iii. 23, 8.
[2] Paus., iii. 23, 9.
[3] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 100.
[4] Tibul., i. 8, 19: "Cantus vicinis fruges traducit ab agris."
[5] *De Civ. Dei*, viii. 19.

Tabulis, id est Romanorum antiquissimis legibus, Cicero commemorat esse conscriptum et ei qui hoc fecerit supplicium constitutum ?" From all this, therefore, we gather that the old Roman laws forbade the use of evil spells, and we find in another fragment of the XII Tables the words "qui malum carmen incantasset." In later times this was usually taken as referring to libel and slander, but there can be no doubt that the *carmina* here alluded to were originally magical, and became *carmina famosa* in course of legal interpretation. Cicero seems to combine the two meanings in the *De Republica* when he says that the Tables made it a capital offence "si quis occentavisset, sive carmen condidisset quod infamiam faceret flagitiumve alteri" ("to bring shame or criminal reproach on another").[1]

That spells were used by eminent Romans is evident from Pliny, who tells us that Julius Cæsar, after meeting with a carriage accident, used to repeat a certain charm three times, so soon as he had taken his seat in any vehicle. Pliny adds, "id quod plerosque nunc facere."[2] He also tells us that Marcus Servilius Nonianus, *princeps civitatis* at Rome, fearing that he was threatened with ophthalmia, had a piece of paper with the Greek letters *rho* and *alpha* written upon it. This he wrapped in linen and wore round his neck, and unless he was wearing the charm he would not venture to utter the name of the disease.[3] Mucianus, who was consul three times, had a live fly, wrapped in a piece of white linen, which he also carried about as a charm against ophthalmia.

[1] W. Warde Fowler, *Rom. Rel. Ex.*, p. 57 *sq.*
[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 5.
[3] *Ibid.*, xxviii. 4.

It was a common practice to write up spells on the walls of houses as a protection against fire and other evils. From Pliny, again, we learn that it was generally believed that serpents could counteract incantations, and that by the agency of magic spells the Marsi could attract serpents to one place, even in the middle of the night when the snakes were asleep.[1] He tells us also that hailstorms might be averted by means of a certain charm, "the words of which," adds Pliny, "I really could not venture seriously to transcribe."[2]

The songs sung by the Sirens were a kind of spell or incantation to lure men to them. In the *Odyssey*[3] we read that the Sirens "bewitch all men, whoso shall come to them. Whoso draws nigh them unwittingly and hears the sound of the Sirens' voice, never doth he see wife or babes stand by him on his return, nor have they joy at his coming; but the Sirens enchant him with their clear song, sitting in the meadow, and all about is a great heap of bones of men, corrupt in death, and round the bones the skin is wasting."[4]

A charm, as a rule, was repeated a fixed number of times, generally three, or some multiple of three.[5] The person reciting the charm usually spat before each repetition.[6]

[1] *Ibid.*, xxviii. 4. [2] *Ibid.*, xvii. 47. [3] Hom., *Od.*, xii. 39 *sqq.*

[4] Translated by Butcher and Lang. A lex Cornelia condemned those who "susurris magicis homines occiderunt" (Just., *Inst.*, iv. 18, 5).

[5] "Τὰς γουναζομένη τρὶς μὲν παρεκέκλετ' ἀοιδαῖς | τρὶς δὲ λιταῖς." (Apoll. Rhod., iv. 1668).

"Terque senem flamma, ter aqua, ter sulphure lustrat" (Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 261).

"Terque manu permulsit eum, tria carmina dixit" (Ovid, *Fast.*, iv. 551). *Cf. Macbeth*, I., iii., 35.

[6] *Vide* p. 31; *cf.* Tib., i. 2, 54 and 96: "Despuit in molles et sibi quisque sinus."

"The repetition of a verbal formula or a ceremonial act three times was thought to please both the deities above and the powers below, and was therefore scrupulously observed, *e.g.*, at a wedding (Catalecta, iv. 9); at a funeral (Horace, *C.*, i. 28, 36); on a birthday (Propertius, iii. 6, 6); at a harvest festival (Virg., *Georg.*, i. 345); at an invocation (Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 510); in the performance of a charm (Tibullus, i. 2, 54, and Horace, *Sat.*, ii. 1, 7)."[1]

5. Numbers.—Numbers played no small part in magic, and the number of victims, the number of altars, and the number of libations were of the highest importance. Pliny asks[2] why it is that odd numbers are considered more efficacious for everything, and Virgil says, "numero deus impare gaudet."[3] Servius, commenting on this, says,[4] "An odd number is immortal because it cannot be divided, and an even one is mortal because it can be, although Varro says the Pythagoreans think that an uneven number has an end and the even one is infinite, and that on this account odd numbers are observed for the purpose of healing and many matters; for, as said above, the gods above delight in odd, the gods below in even numbers."[5] The number two was said to be sacred to Pluto, and four to Mercury.[6]

6. Talismans.—Closely allied to spells and charms are talismans, the wearing of which ensured the operation

[1] D. A. Slater, *Class. Rev.*, XXIII., pp. 252, 253.
[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 5.
[3] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 76. [4] J. J. Mooney, *Old Roman Magic*, p. 68.
[5] Virg., *Æn.*, v. 77 *sqq.*: "Hic duo rite libans carchesia Baccho fundit humi, duo lacte novo, duo sanguine sacro," where Æneas is sacrificing at the tomb of Anchises. *Cf.* Virg., *Æn.*, iii. 305: "Geminas . . . sacraverat aras," where sacrifice is being offered at the tomb of Hector.
[6] Macr., *Sat.*, i., 19, 14.

of the spell that was connected with it, or engraved upon it, being constant, and saved the wearer from a continuous repetition of the charm. Plato tells the story[1] of a certain Lydian shepherd named Gyges, who descended into a chasm made in the earth after a violent storm of rain. In the chasm he found a horse with brazen doors in its sides, which on being opened disclosed the body of a dead man. On the finger of the corpse was a ring, which Gyges removed and placed on his own finger. On rejoining his companions he found that whenever he turned the bezel of the ring towards the palm of his hand he immediately became invisible, while on restoring the ring to the usual position he was visible once more. By means of this ring he slew the king of the country and ascended the throne himself.

Aphrodite is said to have possessed a girdle wherein were contained all enchantments, love, desire and loving converse, and whosoever wore it could compel the love of whomso she would.[2] Hera prevailed upon Aphrodite to lend her this girdle in order that she might beguile Zeus while he slept.

Various objects were used as talismans and amulets,[3] the chief being herbs and plants.[4] The favourites of these were violets, crocuses, casia, narcissi, and helle-

[1] Plato, *Repub.*, ii. 359; *cf.* Cic., *de Off.*, iii. 9; *cf.* Aristoph., *Plut.*, 883 *sq.*

[2] Hom., *Il.*, xiv. 214; *cf.* Mart., vi. 13, 8; xiv. 206; xiv. 207.

[3] The *bulla* was a small object hung round a child's neck as a kind of amulet. It was said to be an Etruscan custom copied by the Romans, and to act as a preventive against witchcraft. A similar object was carried by a triumphing general on his triumph as a protection against the jealousy of the gods. Patricians also wore an ivory crescent (*lunula*) on their shoes. *Cf.* Juv., vii. 192, and Statius, *Silv.*, v. 2, 27.

[4] Apuleius, *Apol.*, 30 (quoting from Lævius), enumerates "radiculæ, herbæ, surculi," among things used for the purposes of magic.

bore; the squill was thought to be a more baleful charm. In this way, too, a magical power was supposed to be exerted on anything by something possessing a similar name or property. Pliny[1] tells us that a herb growing on the head of a statue, wrapped in a piece of the sufferer's clothing, and tied with a red string round his neck, will relieve a headache immediately. He tells us also[2] that there was a herb called *reseda*, which grew round Ariminum, and which cured abscesses and inflammations. However, those who used it as a remedy added the words "allay, allay (*reseda*, *reseda*)[3] these diseases; knowest thou, knowest thou what chick is it that has torn up these roots? Let them have neither head nor feet." This formula was repeated three times, the person spitting before each recital.

According to Homer the *moly* was the most celebrated of all plants. Its discovery was attributed to Mercury, who was the first to point out its uses as neutralizing the most powerful spells of sorcery. Mercury gives a sprig of it to Odysseus to ward off Circe's charms.[4] Pliny tells us[5] that it grew near Lake Pheneus and in Cythene in Arcadia. It had a round black root about the size of an onion, and a leaf like that of the squill; its flower was white. It was supposed to have an abnormally long root. Pliny had a specimen with a root 30 feet long, and even then not entire, that had been dug up in Campania.

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxiv. 2, 106.
[2] *Ibid.*, xxvii. 106.
[3] "Reseda morbos reseda," a pun on the name of the plant and the verb *resedo*.
[4] Hom., *Od.*, x. 302 *sqq.*
[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxv. 8.

The laurel was a favourite plant for use in love charms.[1] As it burnt in the flame of the bitumen or sulphur, it was supposed to make the person against whom the charm was directed burn with a like love for the one using it. Theophrastus (*Char.*, 16) makes a superstitious man walk about all day with a laurel leaf in his mouth as a charm against evil. Apuleius tells us that a draught of spring water, mixed with laurel leaves and a little anise, restores a witch to her normal shape after she has turned herself into an owl.[2] Roses, however, had to be eaten by Lucius to restore himself from an ass to human form.[3]

"Beans, oddly enough, were continually connected with superstitious rites.[4] Pliny tells how the souls of the dead were thought to be in them;[5] and even in Japan we find them connected with these periodical ghost-hunts. And even for some of us to-day, the glossy, dappled surface of the vegetable may have something uncanny about it, like an orchid."[6]

The *spina alba*[7] (white thorn) was considered a powerful averter of magic. In the marriage ceremony the torch

[1] Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 1; Virg. *Ecl.*, viii. 82; Prop., iii. 28, 36; Apul., *Apol.*, 30.
[2] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 23.
[3] *Ibid.*, iii. 25.
[4] Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 576.
[5] Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, xviii. 30) says that beans were thought to dull the senses and cause insomnia and bad dreams, and that it was for this reason that the custom of eating them was condemned by Pythagoras. Others, however, Pliny adds, said the reason was due to the belief that the souls of the dead were imprisoned in the bean. While it has even been suggested that as beans were originally used for voting by ballot, Pythagoras in recommending his disciples to abstain from beans simply meant to abstain from politics. *Cf.* Hor., *Sat.*, ii. 6, 63.
[6] C. C. Martindale, S.J., *In God's Nursery*, p. 5. For the use of beans at the Lemuria *vide supra*, p. 18.
[7] Ovid, *Fast.*, vi. 129; *cf.* Catull., lxi. 15, "pineam quate tædam," where most editors emend to "spineam."

was cut from the thorn tree and carried by a boy whose parents were both alive. On arriving at the house the bride smeared the doorposts with fat and oil, and decorated them with fillets of wool.

7. Method of Gathering Magic Herbs.—Herbs used for incantations had to be gathered at midnight, and reaped with a bronze sickle.[1] Macrobius and Cælius Rhodiginus tell us that copper was preferred to iron in cutting herbs for the purposes of enchantment, in exorcising spirits, and in aiding the moon in eclipses against the charm of the witches, because it was thought to be a purer metal.[2] Medea always uses a bronze scythe;[3] Dido, for her pretended rites, secures herbs that have been mown by moonlight with sickles of bronze.[4] To increase the potency of these herbs, witches had the power of calling down the moon, which then hovered over the herbs, and shed a poisonous foam on them.[5] This foam was employed to make other objects more baleful, as, for example, Harmonia's necklace.[6] The clanging of bells, horns and trumpets was supposed to prevent the magical calling down of the moon from the sky, the general belief being that the witches could torture the goddess until the spell was broken by clanging bronze.[7] Tibullus says, "Incantation checks the

[1] Theoc., ii. 30; Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 577.
[2] Macr., v. 19, 8-13.
[3] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 227.
[4] Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 513.
[5] Lucan, vi. 506: "suppositas propior despumat in herbas." *Ibid.*, 669: "et virus large lunare ministrat." *Cf. Macbeth*: "slips of yew slivered in the moon's eclipse."
[6] Stat., *Theb.*, ii. 284:

"Hæc circum spumis lunaribus unguit
Callidus atque hilari perfundit cuncta veneno"

(*vide Old Roman Magic*, p. 73).
[7] Juv., vi. 442 *sq.*: "Iam nemo tubas, nemo æra fatiget/Una laboranti

course of the angry snake; incantation seeks to draw the moon down from her car, and would do it, but for the blows on the clashing cymbals."[1]

8. The Use of Animal Products in Magic.—"With regard to animal products used in magic it is safe to say that the more disgusting a thing was the more likely was it to be used, and the greater the virtues ascribed to it by the magicians."[2]

The favourite talismans were parts of dead bodies, such as skulls, bones, hands, blood, etc.[3] We read in Apuleius[4] how Pamphile, the witch, sets out in her laboratory fragments of corpses, noses and fingers, blood from the slain, and skulls torn from the fangs of wild beasts. Things that had caused death were also treasured, such as the nails that had fastened victims to the cross, with the flesh still hanging, and arrows with which a death wound had been dealt.[5] Hair was also used,[6] and nail parings.[7]

One of the most efficacious charms was the *hippomanes* (from ἱππο-μαν, horse-mad), a supposed lump or tubercle on the forehead of a new-born foal which the mare immediately devoured or else went mad; hence the name. This tubercle, if plucked away before the

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poterit succurrere Lunæ." *Cf.* Livy, xxvi, 5, 9: "cum æria crepitu, qualis in defectu lunæ silenti nocte cieri solet." Stat., *Theb.*, vi. 685: "sic cadit . . . solis opaca soror; procul auxiliantia gentes / æra crepant." Mart., xii. 57, 16 *sq.*: "Dicet quot æra verberent manus urbis/cum secta Colcho luna vapulat rhombo."

[1] Tib., i. 8, 20 *sqq.*

[2] J. J. Mooney, *Old Roman Magic*, p. 74.

[3] Ovid, *Her.*, vi. 90; Tac., *Ann.*, ii. 69.

[4] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 17.

[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 6.

[6] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 16.

[7] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 23, and Apul., *Apol.*, 30.

mare could devour it, was supposed to act as a most powerful love charm.[1] Virgil, in the *Æneid*,[2] says:

> "Quæritur et nascentis equi de fronte revolsus
> Et matri præreptus amor."

But in the *Georgics*[3] he seems to imply that the real *hippomanes* was a discharge from wind-impregnated mares, but which was also used as a love charm:

> "Hic demum, hippomanes vero quod nomine dicunt
> Pastores, lentum destillat ab inguine virus;
> Hippomanes, quod sæpe malæ legere novercæ,
> Miscueruntque herbas et non innoxia verba."

Theocritus, however, says that the *hippomanes* is a herb that grows in Arcadia, and makes every filly and every mare run raving over the hills.[4] Other animal products were used, such as wolf's beard,[5] wolf's entrails,[6] stag's liver[7] and marrow,[8] the spine of a hyæna,[9] the teeth,[10] sloughed skins,[11] saliva[12] and bones[13] of snakes, frogs,[14] owls' wings,[15] feathers,[16] heart[17] and entrails,[18] and eggs.[19]

Of all animals the mole, according to Pliny,[20] was most essential to magicians. "If anyone swallows the heart

[1] Apul., *Apol.*, 30.
[2] Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 515; *cf.* Pliny, viii. 165.
[3] Virg., *Georg.*, iii. 280.
[4] Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 48. Apuleius, *Apol.*, 30, quoting Lævius, speaks of "hinnientium dulcedines," which may refer to the *hippomanes*.
[5] Hor., *Sat.*, i., 8, 42.
[6] Ovid., *Met.*, vii. 273.
[7] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*
[8] Lucan, vi. 673.
[9] *Ibid.*, 672; *cf.* Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 27.
[10] Pliny, xxviii. 27.
[11] Lucan, vi. 677.
[12] Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 42.
[13] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 272.
[14] Sen., *Med.*, 732.
[15] Prop., iii. 6, 28.
[16] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 269.
[17] Prop., iii. 6, 29.
[18] Hor., *Epod.*, v. 20.
[19] Sen., *Med.*, 733; Hor., *Epod.*, v. 20.
[20] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxx. 7.

of a mole," he says, "fresh from the body and still palpitating, he will receive the gift of divination, and a foreknowledge of future events." Toothache could also be cured by attaching a mole's tooth to one's person. The lizard also was used in magic rites: Simætha[1] threatens to pound up an eft into a potion for her faithless lover. Apuleius[2] quotes the following verse from Lævius:

> "philtra omnia undique eruunt;
> antipathes illud quæritur,
> trochiscili, ungues, tæniæ,
> radiculæ, herbæ, surculi,
> *sauræ inlices bicodulæ*
> hinnientium dulcedines."

In the *Demotic Magical Papyrus* we read:[3] "You put a *two-tailed lizard* into the oil and cook it, and anoint the man with it; then [he dies ?]."

Milk was also employed.[4] On Virgil, *Æneid*, iii. 68[5] and v. 78,[6] Servius says that the spirits of the dead take especial pleasure in offerings of warm milk and of blood, and that for this reason mourning women lacerate their faces and beat their breasts to force the milk out of them. Tibullus[7] in describing the practices of a witch says: "Now with magic shrillings she keeps the troops of the grave before her; now she sprinkles them with milk and commands them to retreat." In Statius[8] we find that

[1] Theoc. ii. 58.
[2] Apul., *Apol.*, 30.
[3] *Dem. Mag. Pap.*, col. xiii., 97, translated by Griffith and Thompson.
[4] *Old Roman Magic*, p. 75.
[5] "Inferimus tepido spumantia cymbia lacte
Sanguinis et sacri pateras" (*Æn.*, iii. 66 *sqq.*).
[6] "Hic duo rite mero libans carchesia Baccho
Fundit humi, duo lacte novo, duo sanguine sacro "(*Æn.*, v. 78 *sq.*).
[7] Tib., i. 2, 48.
[8] "Munera verni/lactis" (Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 452 *sq.*).

warm milk is one of the offerings made in calling up spirits. Honey also was used.[1]

Human saliva[2] was considered a great averter of witchcraft and mischances. Thus when anyone met a witch, he spat in her eyes, and a person who limped or was lame in the right foot met with similar treatment. A patient suffering from an epileptic fit was also spat upon.[3] It was a common practice to spit in the right shoe before putting it on in the morning, to bring the wearer luck. This habit may be paralleled to-day with that of "the man in the street" who spits on his money for similar reasons. It was also customary to spit on the ground when passing a place where one had once been in danger. The action of spitting was supposed to have a twofold use when employed during the recital of a charm, for it was thought to render the charm more powerful, and to avert disaster from the reciter.[4] The pain of a blow was believed to be assuaged if the man who had dealt it spat into the palm of his hand. Frogs, toads and serpents were supposed to split in two if spat upon, and saliva was said to be especially efficacious against the poison of snakes.

9. Use of Various Inanimate Things in Magic.—Wax[5] was a useful auxiliary in magic rites, and was employed either in lumps or made into a figure representing the person against whom a spell was directed. As a general rule a corresponding figure of clay was used, and both were put by the fire, so that in proportion as

[1] "Spargens humida mella soporiferumque papaver" (Hos. Geta, *Med.*, 336); *vide Old Roman Magic*, p. 75.
[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 7.
[3] Plaut., *Capt.*, 550.
[4] Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 62.
[5] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 81; Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 28.

the wax figure melted and the clay one hardened, the heart of the lover might melt towards the spell-worker and harden towards all other maidens. In later times it became a common practice to subject a waxen figure of an enemy to some dire treatment, in the belief that similar pains would attack the person in the flesh. Such a practice is ascribed to Catherine de Medici, among others. Ovid[1] twice relates that it was the habit of witches to stick needles into wax figures of their enemies, in the belief that the original would be stabbed to death.[2] In other cases wax was employed very much in the same way as lead—that is, for writing down the name of the proscribed person.[3]

Sulphur also was freely employed;[4] probably, it is thought, in the belief that just as everything in the lower world was supposed to be enveloped in sulphurous flame and smoke, so the rites of sacrifice should be veiled in the same fumes. It may also have been thought that when spirits were invoked from the underworld, it was a delicate attention to greet them with the same smell to which they were accustomed in the nether regions. When a person recovered from a serious illness, thereby cheating the gods below of

[1] "Devovet absentis, simulacraque cerea fingit
Et miserum tenuis in iecur urget acus" (Ovid, *Her.*, vi. 91 *sq.*). *Cf. Amor.*, iii., 7, 30; *cf.* Plato, *Legg.*, 933 B, where he speaks of the alarm felt by men: ἂν ποτε ἄρα ἴδωσί που κήρινα μιμήματα πεπλασμένα.

[2] *Cf.* Prop., iii. 6, 30: "cinctaque funesto lanea vitta viro," which means that a waxen figure of the object of the spells had had its head adorned with a woollen fillet.

[3] Ovid, *Amor.*, iii. 7, 29: "Sagave pœnicea defixit nomina cera." *Cf.* Tac., *Ann.*, ii. 69.

[4] "Lambere sulphureas permiserat anguibus undas" (Stat., *Theb.*, i. 91). *Cf.* Nem., *Buc.*, iv. 64; Ovid, *Rem. Am.*, 260; *vide Old Roman Magic*, p. 77.

their victim, purificatory rites, wherein sulphur was largely used, had to be performed.[1] Sulphur was also used for purifying sheep that might have eaten grass off graves, and again for cleansing houses.[2] On the 15th of February every year a festival of purification and expiation was held, sulphur being freely employed.[3] Bitumen, or pitch, was probably used as much for its black colour as for its combustible properties. When burned with bay twigs it was supposed to kindle a corresponding flame in the heart of some person, on whose account it was burnt.[4]

Lead was employed for the purpose of performing the practice known as *defixio*.[5] The name of the doomed person was inscribed upon a leaden tablet through which a nail was driven. The tablet was then either buried or thrown into running water. Pliny says: "We are all afraid of being nailed (*defigi*) by spells and curses

[1] Tibul., i., 5, 11.

[2] Ovid, *Fast.*, iv. 739:

"Cærulei fiant vivo de sulfure fumi,
Tactaque fumanti sulfure balet ovis."

[3] "The word *februum*, from which comes the name of our second month, meant an object with magical potency, such as water, fire, sulphur, laurel, wool, or the strips of the victims sacrificed at the Lupercalia; and the verb *februare* meant to get rid of certain unwholesome or miasmatic influences by means of these objects" (W. Warde Fowler, *Relig. Exp. of the Rom. People*, p. 210).

[4] Servius, commenting on Virgil, *Ecl.*, viii. 83, "Sparge molam, et fragiles incende bitumine laurus," says: "That is, burn the bays with divine fire, for bitumen is said to be produced from lightning. Therefore, because lightning frequently falls there, a lake near Babylon abounds with this substance to such an extent that Semiramis was said to have made her walls of it. And since it sticks together and burns well, it is taken up for the purpose of magic in order that the husband may be stuck together to and burn towards his love" (*vide* J. J. Mooney, *Old Roman Magic*, pp. 77, 78).

[5] *Cf.* Pind., *Pyth.*, iv. 71; Tac., *Ann.*, ii. 69; Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 575.

(*diris precationibus*)." A consul had the power of driving a nail into the wall of the Cella Jovis, which action was supposed to check a pestilence. Pliny[1] tells us that if a whetstone, upon which iron tools have been frequently sharpened, is put without his knowledge under the pillow of a person dying of poison, he will give evidence as to what poison has been administered, and when and where, though without disclosing the author of the crime.

Pebbles were sometimes used in magic, as well as precious stones. Medea, for example, fetched stones from the furthest East.[2] Threads of three different colours also played their part.[3] These three colours, according to Servius, were white, rose-red and black. In Petronius Arbiter[4] we read, in an account of a magic practice, how an old woman brought from her pocket a skein twisted from threads of different colours, and tied it round her patient's neck. Then she took up some dust, mixed with spittle, on her middle finger, and despite his protest, made a mark on his forehead with it. Then she recited a charm, and bade the man throw some pebbles wrapped in purple, over which she had cast a spell, into his bosom three times.

One of the chief instruments used in magical practices is the ἴυγξ or *rhombus*. Exactly what this was is not really known; but it has been sufficiently established that it was some kind of magic wheel which could be whirled, and to which threads could be attached. The Greek name ἴυγξ is derived from the bird wryneck

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 12.
[2] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 266; *cf.* Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxvii. 54.
[3] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 74; *cf.* Nem., *Buc.*, iv. 67.
[4] Petr., *Sat.*, 131.

(ἴυγξ) which witches used to bind to their wheel, believing that when the wheel was set going, the hearts of their victims were also stirred and drawn along until they were charmed into obedience. The wheel was consequently much used to recover unfaithful lovers, and the process of setting the wheel in action for such a purpose was called ἕλκειν ἴυγγα ἐπί τινι.[1] The following account of the ἴυγξ is given by Pindar:[2] "There the queen of keenest darts, the Cyprian born goddess, first brought to men from Olympus the frenzied bird, the speckled wryneck of the four-spoked wheel,[3] binding the bird to a circle without deliverance, and taught the son of Æson to be wise in prayers and charms."

We find Socrates jokingly referring to the ἴυγξ in his conversation with Theodota.[4] "Do you know such arts, Socrates?" she says. "Through what other influence," replies the philosopher, "think you that Apollodorus and Antisthenes stay with me, and Cebes and Simmias come to me from Thebes? I do not accomplish this without many love-charms, incantations and magic wheels." "Then lend me your magic wheel," implores Theodota, "and I will set it going first of all against you yourself."

According to Clement of Alexandria and Arnobius, the *rhombus* or magic wheel was used in the mysteries of Dionysus. It had a string attached to it, by which it was twirled in the air, making a rushing noise, as the

[1] Pind., *Nem.*, iv. 56; *cf.* Luc., *Dom.*, 13; Aristoph., *Lys.*, 1110, *Lyc.*, 310, etc.

[2] Pind., *Pyth.*, iv. 381.

[3] The ἴυγξ τετράκναμος is probably the wheel with the wings and legs of the wryneck spread out so as to form four spokes.

[4] Xen., *Mem.*, III., xi. 7.

Scholiast explains (*κῶνος· ξυλάριον οὗ ἐξῆπται το σπαρτίον καὶ ἐν ταῖς τελεταῖς ἐδονεῖτο ἵνα ῥοιζῇ*), with which agrees the passage in Euripides' *Helena*, 1362, where the *rhombi* of the Bacchanals are whirled round and round in the air.[1]

During the recital of her incantation, Simætha whirls her magic wheel,[2] to which the wryneck itself was in all probability attached, and it serves as a kind of accompaniment or *obbligato* to her monologue.

Other Greek names by which the rhombus was known are *στρόβιλος* and *βέμβιξ*. In Horace it appears under the name of *turbo*.[3] From Propertius[4] we gather that it had strings or threads (*licia*, *stamina*) attached to it, by which it was whirled. It is possible that the practice of attaching strings to the wheel was founded on the so-called threads of destiny, it being in the power of the witch to shorten or lengthen these threads at will, as she twirled the *rhombus*. Some think that the use of the *licia* (the cords or thrums of the old warp) implied that the minds of men were to be influenced by the witch in the same way as the thrums of the warp are caught up and held fast by new threads.

Lamps were occasionally employed for magical purposes. Pamphile announces at dinner one night that there will be rain on the following day, and when Milo, her husband, asks her how she knows, she replies that

[1] *Vide* Class. Dict., *sub* turbo.

[2] Theoc., *Id.*, ii. *passim*.

[3] Hor., *Epod.*, xvii. 7. Apuleius, *Apol.*, 30, speaks of *trochiscilli*, quoting from Lævius, and may refer to the *rhombus*.

[4] Prop., iii. 6, 26: "staminea rhombi ducitur illa rota." *Cf.* Ovid, *Amor.*, 1, 8, 7: "Scit bene quid gramen, quid torta concita rhombo/licia, quid valeat virus amantis equæ." *Cf.* Lucan, vi. 460, and Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 575.

her lamp has told her.[1] Again, when she transforms herself into an owl, we read that she held long and mysterious converse with her lamp.[2] Perfumed oil was usually burnt, and the lamp was used sometimes merely to provide a point of light reflected in a basin of water, to secure a concentrated gaze, just as crystal balls are used to-day, for purposes of mesmerism.[3] Pliny[4] says that according to Osthanes, magic was practised with the aid of water, balls, air, stars, lamps, basins and hatchets, and that these instruments enable one to foretell the future, and to hold converse with ghosts and spirits of the dead. The water of magic wells was used for purposes of reflection, and wizards were supposed to be able to read the future in the water's depths. Some think that there is some such reference as this in Propertius' line, "umbrave quæ *magicis* mortua prodit *aquis*."[5]

In the *Demotic Magical Papyrus* several accounts are given of divination by the aid of a lamp—for example: "An inquiry of the lamp. You go to a clean dark cell without light and you dig a new hole in an east wall, and you take a white lamp in which no minimum of gum water has been put, its wick being clean, and you fill it with genuine Oasis oil, and you recite the spells of praising Ra at dawn in his rising, and you bring the lamp when lighted opposite the sun, and recite to it the spells as below four times, and you take it into the cell,

[1] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 21; *cf.* Aristoph., *Vesp.*, 261-263. [2] *Loc. cit.*
[3] "On the people of Tralles consulting the magic art in an enquiry concerning the issue of the Mithridatic war, a boy, while contemplating the reflection of an image of Mercury on some water, chanted the things which would come to pass in 160 lines of verse" (Apul., *Apol.*, 42).
[4] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxx. 5. [5] Prop., iv. 1, 106.

you being pure, and the boy also, and you pronounce the spells to the boy, he not looking at the lamp, his eyes being closed, seven times. You put pure frankincense on the brazier. You put your finger on the boy's head, his eyes being closed. When you have finished you make him open his eyes towards the lamp; then he sees the shadow of the god about the lamp, and he inquires for you concerning that which you desire. You must do it at midday in a place without light. If it be that you are enquiring for a spirit damned, a wick of sail-cloth (?) is what you put in the lamp, and you fill it with clean butter. If it is some other business, a clean wick with pure genuine oil is that which you put in the lamp; if you will do it to bring a woman to a man, ointment of roses is that which you put in the lamp. You must lay the lamp on a new brick, and the boy also must sit on another brick with his eyes closed. You cry down into his head four times." (Here follow the spells.)[1]

Water from Lake Avernus, real or pretended, was used in magic rites on account of its deadly properties. Avernus was a cavern and lake near Naples, where there was supposed to be an entrance to the underworld, a supposition which naturally gave rise to the idea that the waters of the lake would be especially efficacious in spells. When Dido is making ready her sham magic rites to baffle her sister Anna, she sprinkles the altar with feigned draughts from the springs of Avernus.[2] Witches commonly sprinkled their victims with water, and Diana and Proserpina do the same when

[1] *Dem. Mag. Pap.*, col. vi. (1), p. 51, translated by Griffith and Thompson.

[2] Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 512; *cf.* Hor., *Epod.*, v. 26; and Hos. Geta, *Med.*, 337.

transforming Actæon into a stag[1] and Ascalaphus into an owl[2] respectively.

Mirrors were also used for much the same purpose as water—that is, to obtain a point of reflected light for mesmeric practice.[3] We read, "There was besides this folly in Julianus, that through the magicians he avoided very many things by which he thought that the hatred of the people would be softened down or the arms of the soldiers held in check. For they both sacrificed certain victims not consistent with Roman rites and chanted profane charms; and those things which they say are done at the mirror, in which blindfolded boys are said to see the future in a charmed whirl, Julianus did. And then the boy is said to have seen both the coming of Severus and the decease of Julianus."[4] It is possible that designs were drawn on these mirrors which would be invisible when the glass was polished, but would come into sight when the glass was dulled by being breathed upon or otherwise moistened.

10. Purposes for which Magic was Employed.—One of the most common purposes for which magic was used was to secure the affections of an unfaithful or indifferent lover, or to wreak vengeance upon an enemy by severing the affection of another for him. Love charms and philtres were always in demand. "How are men made friends?" Critobulus asks Socrates. "They say," replies the philosopher, "that there are certain incantations which those who know them chant to whomsoever they please, and thus make them their friends; and that there are also love potions (φίλτρα)

[1] Ovid, *Met.*, iii. 190.
[2] *Ibid.*, v. 544.
[3] Paus., vii. 21, 12.
[4] *Script. Hist. Aug. Did. Jul.*, 7, 9.

which those who know them minister to whomso they will; and are in consequence loved by them."[1] We learn from Pliny[2] that Lucullus lost his life through taking a love philtre, said by Plutarch to have been administered by his freedman Callisthenes to win his affection. It is also a well-known story that Lucretius committed suicide in a frenzy brought on through drinking a love potion; while Caligula was driven mad by one administered by his wife Cæsonia.[3] This potion, according to Juvenal, was the love-charm *hippomanes*.[4]

The following is a love-charm given in one of the magical papyri:[5]

> Ἀγωγὴ ἀγρυπνητική· λαβὼν νυκτερίδος
> ὀφθαλμοὺς ζῶσαν αὐτὴν ἀπόλυσον καὶ λαβὼν
> σταίτιον ὠμὸν ἢ κηρὸν ἄπυρον πλᾶσον κυ-
> νάριον καὶ τὸν δεξιὸν ὀφθαλμὸν τῆς νυκτε-
> ρίδος εἰς τὸν δεξιὸν ὀφθαλμὸν τοῦ κυναριόυ ἐν-
> θὲς καὶ τὸν εὐώνυμον ὁμοίως ἐς τὸν εὐώνυμον
> καὶ λαβὼν βελόνην, διείρων τὴν οὐσίαν
> εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν βελόνην. διεῖρον διὰ τῶν ὀφθαλ-
> μων τοῦ κυναρίου, ἵνα ἡ οὐσία φαίνηται, καὶ βά-
> λε αὐτὸ εἰς κωθώνισν καινὸν καὶ πιττακίσας
> αὐτὸ σφράγισον αὐτὸ ἰδίῳ δακτυλίῳ, ἔχων
> κορκοδείλους ἀντικεφάλους αὐτοίς καὶ κατα-
> θοῦ αὐτὸ εἰς τρίοδον σημειωσάμενος, ἵνα,
> ἂν θέλῃς αὐτὸ ἀρεῖν, εὑρῇς. λόγος ὁ γραφόμενος εἰς τὸ πιττάκιον·

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[1] Xen., *Mem.*, ii. 6, 10.
[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxv. 7.
[3] Suet., *Calig.*, 50: "creditur potionatus a Cæsonia uxore amatorio quidem medicamento sed quod in furorem vertent." *Cf.* Tac., *Ann.*, iv. 22 *sub fin.*
[4] Juv., vi. 615.
[5] *Pap. Par.*, 2943 *sqq.* For other love charms and potions *vide Pap. Lugd.* (Abraxas, 192, 9 *sqq.*), Mus. Brit., cxxi. 309, Pap. I. 395, viii. 8 *sqq.*, etc.

ἐξορκιζω σε τρὶς κατὰ τῆς Ἑκάτης
φορ φορ βα βαι βω φωρ βωρ βα, ἵνα ἀπο-
βάληται τὸ πυρινὸν ἡ δεῖνα ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ ἢ καὶ
ἀγρυπνῇ, κατὰ νοῦν μηδένα ἔχουσα, εἰ μὴ
ἐμὲ τὸν δεῖνα μόνον. ἐξορκίζω σε κατὰ τῆς κόρης
Τριοδίτιδος γενομένης ἢτ' ἔστιν ἀλη-
θὴς ἡ μήτηρ Πλούτου· ἐθέλεις φορβεα
Βριμὼ νηρηα τοδαμων βριμων σεδνα·
δαρδαρ· πανοπαια ιωτη· ποίησον τὴν δεῖνα
ἀγρυπνοῦσαν μοι διὰ παντος.

Various were the charms used to sever the affections of relatives or lovers.[1] In Nemesianus[2] we find the following little dialogue in his *Bucolics*:

Mopsus: "What does it benefit me that the mother of rustic Amyntas has purified me thrice with fillets, thrice with a sacred bough, thrice with the vapour of frankincense,[3] burning the crackling laurels with live sulphur, and pours the ashes out into the stream with averted face, when thus wretched I am everyway inflamed for Meroë?"
Lycidas: "These same things, the many-coloured threads have done for me, and Mycale has carried round me a thousand unknown herbs. She has chanted the charm, by which the moon swells, by which the snake is burst, the rocks run and standing corn removes, and a tree is plucked up. Lol my handsome Iollas is nevertheless more, is more to me."

This conversation seems to show that magic was not always efficacious in quenching love.

Another purpose for which recourse was had to magic was to inflict some disease upon the subject of one's hatred. This was usually accomplished by the method described above,[4] of making a waxen image of the per-

[1] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 64-109; Hor., *Epod.*, v; Apul., *Met.*, ix. 29. *Cf.* Hor., *Odes*, i., 27, 21:

"Quæ saga, quis te solvere Thessalis
Magus venenis, quis poterit deus?"

and Tibul., i. 2, 59. [2] Nem., *Buc.*, iv. 62 *sqq.*; trans. by J. J. Mooney, *Old Roman Magic*, p. 83.
[3] The use of incense was regular in magic rites. *Cf.* Apul., *Apol.*, 30.
[4] *Vide supra*, p. 31.

son whose injury was desired, and melting it in the fire, or stabbing it, or otherwise maltreating it, in the belief that the same kind of suffering would befall the original. Sometimes two effigies were made, one of wool, usually black, and the other of wax,[1] the woollen one representing the person employing the magic, the waxen one the victim. Sometimes the practice of *defixio* alone was employed. In Ovid[2] we read: "Does my body languish devoted by a Thessalian drug? Does charm or herb injure me, poor wretch? Or has a witch nailed down my name in Punic wax, or driven fine needles into the midst of my liver?" A person's footprint might be used instead of a tablet, and we read in Pliny[3] that epilepsy could be cured by driving a nail into the place where the sufferer first touched the ground when he fell during a fit.

In Tacitus we find a description of the methods employed by Piso in his alleged attempt to bring about the death of Germanicus by magical arts. "A discovery was made," says Tacitus,[4] "of a singular nature. Under the floor and in the cavities of the walls, a collection of human bones was found, with charms and magic verses and incantations. The name of Germanicus was graved on plates of lead; fragments of human bodies, not quite consumed to ashes, were discovered in a putrid condition, with a variety of those magic spells which, according to the vulgar opinion, are of potency to devote the souls of the living to the infernal gods."

[1] Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 30: "lanea et effigies erat, altera cerea." *Cf.* Hor., *Epod.*, xvii. 76; Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 81; Ovid, *Her.*, vi. 91; Theoc., *Id.*, 2; Lucian, *Dial. Mer.*, 4; Plato, *Legg.*, ii, 933; Ovid, *Am.*, 1, 8.

[2] Ovid, *Am.*, iii. 7, 29.

[3] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 17.

[4] Tac., *Ann.*, ii. 59, translated by A. Murphy.

Magic was also used for finding out what had happened, or what was to happen in the future, though, as a rule, only in extraordinary cases, the usual method of augury being generally employed. The most celebrated instance of the use of magic to reveal coming events is found in Lucan,[1] where Sextus Pompeius is supposed to visit the witch Erichtho, who summons up a spirit from the dead to foretell the issue of the battle of Pharsalia.

Another use of magic was to procure suitable weather for sailing, and to raise[2] and allay storms. In Herodotus[3] we read: "But at length the Magi, having sacrificed victims and endeavoured to charm the winds by incantations, and moreover, having offered sacrifices to Thetis and the Nereids, laid the storm on the fourth day." Herodotus, however, cannot refrain from adding, "or perhaps it abated of its own accord!" We read of Medea,[4] "Now does she remove these winds from us with magic chant and smooth the steep seas with dreadful tongue." The goddesses were also accustomed to speed their favourites on their way with favouring gales: both Calypso and Circe sent a light breeze in Odysseus' wake when he sailed away from them.[5]

A very favourite practice of witches was to use their magic power to transform themselves into animals and birds.[6] Some extended this metamorphosis to others;[7]

[1] Luc., vi. 430 *ad fin.*; *cf.* Amm. Marcel., xxix. 1, 29-32.
[2] *Cf. Macbeth*, I. iii. 11.
[3] Herod., vii. 191, translated by H. F. Cary. *Cf.* Hos. Geta, *Med.*, 224; Tib., i. 2, 49; Ovid, *Am.*, i. 8, 9.
[4] Val. Flacc., viii. 351. [5] Hom., *Od.*, xi. 7; v. 268.
[6] Ovid, *Met.*, viii. 871 *sqq.* *Cf.* Hom., *Od.*, iv. 455, for the account of Proteus. *Cf. Macbeth*, I. i. 8, 9: "Graymalkin," "Paddock."
[7] Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 249-286; Virg., *Æn.*, vii. 15-20; Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 320 *sqq.*

for example, it was Circe's chief delight to turn men into swine, and William of Malmesbury[1] tells a story of two witches at Rome who made their living by changing men into useful and domestic animals and selling them. The owl was the favourite bird into which witches transformed themselves, so that they could carry on their nefarious practices by night.[2] Ovid gives a graphic description[3] of the *striges*, or screech-owls, monsters allied to the harpies, who carried off children in the night-time when their nurses' backs were turned. Paley thinks that the notion that these birds were a sort of magic creation arose from their hovering about the tombs by night; and hence, in turn, their feathers were used in incantations.[4] Proteus,[5] the sea god, had the power of turning himself into any shape he pleased. We find in Ovid a suggestion that even men could turn themselves into owls. "There is a rumour," he says,[6] "that there are men in Hyperborean Pallene who are accustomed to have their bodies clothed with light feathers when they have dipped nine times in the Tritonian lake (I don't indeed believe it); the Scythian women, also, having sprinkled their limbs with poison, are related to exercise the same arts."

Another practice, known as lycanthropy, one which seems to have been common, was to change oneself into a wolf. Pliny[7] tells us that "one of the stock of a certain Anthius, chosen by ballot of the family, is led to a certain pool in the region of Arcadia, and having hung

[1] ii. 10. [2] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 23.
[3] Ovid, *Fast.*, vi. 142 *sqq.*; *cf.* Ovid, *Am.*, i. 8, 13 *sq.*
[4] Propert., iv. (iii.) 6, 29.
[5] Virg., *Georg.*, iv. 388 *sqq.* [6] Ovid, *Met.*, xv. 356.
[7] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, viii. 33; trans. by J. J. Mooney.

his clothing on an oak tree, swims across the water[1] and goes away into the wilderness, and is transformed into a wolf, and companies with the rest of his kind for nine years.[2] If during this time he has kept himself from man, he returns to the same pool, and when he has swum across it, recovers his shape, with the decay of nine years added to his former appearance; also (this is more fabulous) he takes again the same clothing."

Petronius[3] gives a full account of such a transformation. Niceros, at the banquet of Trimalchio, tells the following story. "We trundled off at cock-crow," he says; "the moon was shining bright as day; we got to where the wood leads between the graves; my man made off to go behind a tombstone; I sat down singing and began to count the stars. Then, when I looked round for my friend, I found he'd undressed himself and laid all his clothes by the roadside. My heart was in my mouth and I stood there stock still like a dead man. But he made a ring of water round his clothes, and all of a sudden turned into a wolf. Please don't think I'm joking: I wouldn't tell a lie for a fortune. But, as I was just saying, when he became a wolf, he started howling and ran off into the wood. At first I hadn't an idea where I was, then I went up to take away his clothes, but they had been turned into stone. . . . I drew my sword and slashed at shadows the whole way home till I came to my sweetheart's house. I came in

[1] The crossing of the water contains the same fundamental idea as when the transformation of another was effected. *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, iii. 190.

[2] Herodotus (iv. 105) tells us that the Neurians seem to be magicians, for once every year each Neurian becomes a wolf for a few days, and then is restored again to his former state.

[3] Petr., *Cen. Trim.*, 62, translated by W. D. Lowe, with one slight alteration.

looking like a ghost, with the sweat running down my legs and my eyes set and staring like a dead man's. . . . My darling Melissa said: 'If you'd come a bit before, you could have at least helped us: for a wolf came into the courtyard and attacked all the flocks and bespattered them with blood. But even if he did get away . . . a slave of ours pierced his neck with a spear. . . .' When it was full daylight I hurried back to the house of my master Caius, . . . and when I reached the place where the clothes had been turned into stone, I could find nothing but blood. But when I got home I found my soldier friend lying full length on a bed like an ox and a doctor was looking after his neck. I then saw that he was a werewolf, and I couldn't have eaten a bite of bread with him afterwards to save my life."

Magic was often useful for finding lost articles. Apuleius[1] tells us that when Fabius, "having lost 500 denarii, came to consult Nigidius, the latter by means of incantations inspired certain boys so that they were able to indicate to him where a pot containing a certain portion of money had been hidden in the ground, and how the remainder had been dispersed, one denarius having found its way into the possession of Cato the philosopher. This coin Cato acknowledged he had received from a certain lackey as a contribution to the treasury of Apollo." An old charm for the recovery of runaway horses was for the owner to write on a piece of paper with his left hand the name of the horse, or else to write behind the door, "Irrifa epona nupsit illegy."[2]

[1] Apul., *Apol.*, 42.
[2] *Vide* Richotta's *Anec. Lat.*, and *cf.* Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 13 (*vide Old Roman Magic*, pp. 88, 89).

Bewitching of Crops

That it was a common practice to cast a spell over another's crops has already been shown. Pliny relates the following anecdote from Piso:[1] "C. Furius Cressinus, a man freed from slavery, having obtained much larger crops on his quite small piece of land than his neighbours had from their very much larger ones, was regarded with great ill-will as though he had drawn away other people's crops by sorcery. Wherefore, fearing lest he should be condemned, on the day appointed by Spurius Albinus, the curule ædile, when the case would have to be decided by the vote of the tribes, he brought all his agricultural implements into the Forum, and also his strong, well-fed and well-dressed household, excellently made iron tools, etc., and oxen. He was acquitted unanimously."

We find instances of neighbours' crops and trees being afflicted with blight, or the cattle bewitched,[2] by means of the evil eye, or by the malign aspect of some planet. Thus the verb *fascinare* (βασκαίνω), the origin of the English fascinate, is the term used to describe this superstition of the "evil eye."[3] Lactantius Placidius says[4] that when the three envious brothers Telchines saw the fields of their neighbours smiling and fruitful, they sprinkled them with Stygian waters to render them sterile. Strabo adds that they were enchanters who besprinkled plants and animals with waters of the Styx to destroy them.

Among the less important purposes for which magic

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xviii. 8; *vide Old Roman Magic*, p. 89.
[2] Virg., *Ecl.*, iii. 103; *cf.* Pliny, xvii. 24; Tib., i. 8, 19; Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 99.
[3] *Cf.* Catull., vii. 12; Theoc., *Id.*, vi. 39; and Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, vii. 2.
[4] On Stat., *Theb.*, ii. 274; and *cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 365.

was used may be mentioned the opening of locked doors, etc., without keys,[1] the sealing up of a person's lips,[2] the retarding or incitement of horses in a chariot race,[3] and the enabling of persons to have children.[4]

11. Magic Employed for Medicinal Purposes.—The two arts of magic and medicine were closely intermingled among the Greeks and the Romans. Most diseases were looked upon as demons, just as in the New Testament it is customary to say of a sufferer, "He hath an evil spirit." It was, however, usually a simple form of magic that was resorted to for the cure of an illness, such as the recital of a charm, the wearing of an amulet, or the application of some herb.

Certain charms were employed on the principle that the demon of the disease could be frightened away by being told that a more powerful demon was on his track. Pliny[5] says, "A common stone, found near rivers, bears a dry, hoary moss; this is rubbed by another stone, with human saliva added, The 'impetigo' is touched by that stone, and he who touches it says, Φεύγετε, *κανθαρίδες*, *λύκος ἄγριος αἷμα διώκει*, ('Flee, Cantharides, a wild wolf seeks your blood')." In the same way the following remedy was recommended for styes: "Take nine grains of barley and prick the stye with their points in turn and say this charm: *φεῦγε, φεῦγε, κρείττων σε διώκει* ('Flee, flee, a better one is after thee')"[6] This

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxvi. 9; Apul., *Met.*, i. 11, 12; Aug., *Civ. Dei*, x. 11.
[2] Cic., *Brut.*, 60: "He suddenly forgot everything he intended to say, and was wont to declare that this had been caused by the magic drugs and enchantments of Titinia." *Cf.* Ovid, *Fast.*, ii. 571-582.
[3] Amm. Marc., xxvi, 3.
[4] Plutarch, *Thes.*; Eurip., *Med.*, *cf. supra*, p. 18.
[5] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxvii. 75.
[6] Marc. Emp., viii. 193.

kind of charm was also used as an inscription on some sort of amulet. As a remedy for pain in the uvula we are told to write on a piece of paper, which must afterwards be hung round the sufferer's neck, the words, "An ant has no blood nor bile; flee, uvula, lest a crab eat thee."[1]

Other charms transferred the disease to some other person or animal.[2] This, of course, was the old idea of the scapegoat. For example, we find "You will ease toothache when, standing with your shoes on, under an open sky upon the living earth, you seize the head of a frog and open his mouth and spit into it, and ask him to take away the toothache with him, and then let him go alive. This you must do in a good day and in a good hour."[3]

Certain charms were supposed to work on the principle of correspondence. For example, you write some long word, such as *abracadabra*, on a piece of paper, tie it with linen thread, and bind it round the waist of a person suffering from hæmorrhage from any part of the body. As the word gets shorter and shorter, so the flow of blood is supposed to grow less and less.[4]

Another kind of cure was supposed to be effected by mentioning some impossible situation or action, on the supposition that the disease would thereby be rendered incapable of harming a person. For example, we are told to recite: "Three maidens were holding a table placed in the middle of the sea; two were twirling it one

[1] Marc. Emp., xiv. 67.
[2] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxviii. 23; *vide Old Roman Magic*, p. 91.
[3] Marc. Emp., xii. 24; *cf.* xxii. 41; xxix. 35.
[4] *Cf.* Serenus Sammon, 935.

way, and one was twirling it back. Inasmuch as this has never been done, so may So-and-so never know the pain of colic."[1]

A mere wish that the disease would depart was sometimes efficacious. Saserna's charm for gout was to touch the earth, spit downwards, and sing twenty-seven times, fasting, "O Earth, keep thou the pain, and health with me remain in my feet."[2]

In other cases it was necessary to recount a little story or legend. A cure for colic was to rub the belly with the left thumb and two little fingers and say, "A tree was standing in the midst of the sea; from it a bucket full of human intestines was hanging; three maidens were going round it, two were binding, one was loosening." This should be said three times, touching the ground and spitting, before each recital.[3]

Some charms were mere jumbles of words,[4] as, for example, another remedy for a stye, which consisted in touching the stye with the medicinal finger, and saying three times, "Vigaria Gasaria"; then the stye had to be cauterised with a burning hot grain of barley, or stalk of hay or straw.[5]

Examples of words with a magical signification are given by Abt,[6] such as *ἀρβακωριφ, μηνιαμ, ὠβαωβ, αβνιωβ, μηριμ, βαιαξ, φηνιμ*, κ.τ.λ.

A singing or buzzing sound in the ears was supposed to be significant.[7] In the magical papyrus we find the fol-

[1] Marc. Emp., xxi. 3; *cf.* viii. 91, xxviii. 16.
[2] Varro, *Re Rus.*, i. 2, 27; *cf.* Marc. Emp., xv. 101, xxvi. 70.
[3] Marc. Emp., xxviii. 74.
[4] *Cf.* p. 16.
[5] Marc. Emp., viii. 193.
[6] Apuleius, *Apol.*, edited by Abt, p. 226, n. 2.
[7] *Cf.* Apul., *Apol.*, 48.

lowing test of a boy's powers as a medium: "You utter this (invocation) down into (the boy's) head for seven times; when you utter this, then his ears speak. If his two ears speak, he is very good; if it be his right ear, he is good; if it be his left ear, he is bad."[1]

[1] *Dem. Mag. Pap.* (Griffith and Thompson), col. iii. (18), p. 35.

III

NECROMANCY

"La nécromancie," says M. Bouché-Leclercq,[1] "n'est, en effet, possible qu'avec le concours de la magie, et c'est là l'unique raison pour laquelle Varron la disait importée de la Perse, le pays de Mages (Varro ap. Aug., *Civ. Dei*, vii. 35)." Professor Headlam points out[2] that in literature, when necromancy is performed, it is always through the agency of one possessing magical powers. Æschylus wrote a play called *ψυχαγωγοί*;[3] Homer clearly means that Odysseus performed magic rites, under the guidance of the enchantress Circe, in order to communicate with the dead;[4] while Æneas, in similar circumstances, has recourse to the Cumæan Sibyl for assistance. Sometimes a wizard-seer, such as Tiresias, gives his assistance; in Heliodorus[5] an old Egyptian woman performs the rite; in Lucian a Babylonian[6]

[1] *Histoire de la Divination*, i., p. 332 (quoted by W. Headlam, *Class Rev.* XVI., p. 55).
[2] *Class. Rev.*, *loc. cit.*
[3] "Phrynicus Bekk. An., 73, 13, says *οἱ ἀρχαῖοι* meant by the words *τοὺς τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν τεθνηκότων γοητείαις τισὶν <αν> ἄγοντας . τῆς αὐ τῆς ἐννοίας καὶ τοῦ Αισχύλου τὸ δρᾶμα ψυχαγωγοί. Cf.* Schol. Eur., *Alc.*, 1128." (W. Headlam, *loc. cit.*)
[4] *Od.*, x. 516 *sqq.*; *cf.* p. 89.
[5] Heliod., vi. 14.
[6] Lucian, i. 464, iii. 39.

or Hyperborean[1] Magus. Nero[2] is helped by the Magi when he endeavours to call up and appease the ghost of Agrippina; Caracalla[3] bids Maternianus seek out the best of the Magi and by the aid of necromancy learn about the end of his life.[4]

The most detailed account of the rites of necromancy, apart from that to be found in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, vi.,[5] is given by Seneca in his *Œdipus*. Tiresias, after trying in vain to discover the name of Laius' murderer by the arts of divination,[6] says that recourse must be had to necromancy; and a minute description of the rites, as carried out by the old blind seer, is given by Creon.[7]

Far without the city is a murky grove, where amid other trees stands one of mighty girth, the guardian of the wood. Hither comes Tiresias; a ditch is dug,[8] and into it brands plucked from funeral pyres are thrown. The old seer shrouds himself in a dark garment, and waves a branch of some funereal tree; his head is bound with a wreath of yew. Black-fleeced sheep[9] and black oxen are dragged to the pit and burnt alive.[10] Then Tiresias summons the spirits of the dead, and calls on Cerberus;[11]

[1] *Idem*, iii. 40.
[2] Sueton., *Vit. Neron.*, 34.
[3] Herodian, iv. 23.
[4] *Vide* W. Headlam, *Class. Rev.*, XVI., pp. 54, 55.
[5] *Vide infra*, pp. 106 *sqq.*
[6] For this detailed account of divination *vide* Sen., *Œd.*, 302 *sqq.*
[7] Sen., *Œd.*, 530 *sqq.*
[8] *Cf.* Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 26.
[9] *Cf.* Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 445: "Velleris obscuri pecudes armentaque sisti / atra monet." *Ib.*, 449.
[10] Sen., *Œd.*, 558: "vivumque trepidat igne ferali pecus." *Cf. ib.*, 564; *Cf.* Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 466. For the sacrifice of the animals *cf.* Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 27; Tibull., i. 262; Lucian, *Necyom.*, 9; Max. Tyr., xiv. 2.
[11] *Cf.* Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 486 *sq.*; Lucan, vi. 702.

he repeats a magic incantation;[1] pours a libation of blood upon the altars, burns the victims whole, and deluges the trench with blood.[2] Next he makes libation of snowy milk,[3] and pours wine[4] upon the left side, still chanting his spells, and, with eyes fixed upon the ground, calls again upon the spirits. The baying of Hecate's hounds is heard; the valleys re-echo; the ground shakes. "They hear me," says the seer. "I have poured forth prevailing words; blind chaos is burst asunder, and a pathway to the upper world lies open for the peoples of Dis." The wood sinks down, the grove bristles with horror; oaks are split in twain; the earth groans and suddenly yawns asunder, and in the gulf are visible sluggish pools and dim shades. Then a savage army leaps forth and stands full armed; Erinys shrieks; Fury, Horror, Grief, Disease, Age, Fear, Pestilence, all are there. Even Manto, Tiresias' daughter, stands amazed. Straightway the shadowy ghosts flit forth, Zethus, Amphion, Niobe, Agave, the Bacchanals and mangled Pentheus. At last comes one, shrinking back and seeking to hide himself amid the throng. The seer redoubles his prayers, and Laius himself stands forth, and speaks with raving lips, declaring Œdipus himself his murderer, and bidding the Thebans drive him from the city.

[1] *Cf.* Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 487; Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 206 *sq.*; Hor., *Epod.*, xvii. 77 *sqq.*; Tibull., i. 2, 45 *sqq.*; Ovid, *Am.*, i. 8, 17 *sq.*; Ovid, *Rem. Am.*, 258 *sq.*; *cf.* Tac., *Ann.*, ii. 28.

[2] *Cf.* Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 28; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 453. Val. Flac., *Arg.*, i. 740; *cf.* St. Aug., *de Civ. Dei*, vii. 35: "Varro . . . adhibito sanguine etiam inferos perhibet sciscitari et νεκρομαντείαν græce dicit vocari."

[3] *Cf.* Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 452 *sq.*, 545 *sqq.*; Tibull., i. 2, 47 *sq.*; Heliod., vi. 14; Æsch., *Pers.*, 611.

[4] *Cf.* Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 452; Heliod. vi. 14; Æsch., *Persæ*, 614 *sq.*, where in all three cases honey is also used.

The following deities are invoked during the rites of necromancy: Hecate,[1] Pluto,[2] Persephone,[2] Mercury,[3] Chaos,[4] Charon,[5] Styx,[6] Cerberus,[7] Elysium,[8] the Fates,[9] the Eumenides or Furies,[10] Earth[11] and the nameless god Demogorgon.[12]

A description of the raising of the ghost of Darius occurs in Æschylus' *Persæ*. "It will be conceded," says Headlam,[13] "that the chorus, whom Atossa bids perform the evocation, are supposed to be endowed with the *magic* powers of the Persian Magi—as the Greeks in general conceived them."

Very little in the way of ceremonial is needed to draw Darius from the underworld, though he implies, on arrival, that he has had some difficulty in getting away. Atossa prepares offerings that are acceptable to the dead, new milk, honey, wine and the fruit of the olive tree.[14] As she pours libations to the gods below, the chorus chant a kind of incantation (to which Darius refers with

[1] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 195; Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 33; Lucan, vi. 736 *sqq.*; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 514 *sq.*; *Pap. Par.*, 1432 *sqq.*; *Ib.*, 1443; *Ib.*, 1462; Lucian, *Necyom.*, 9.
[2] Lucan, vi. 697; Sen., *Œd.*, 559; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 457; *Ib.*, 478 *sq.*
[3] Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 481 *sq.*; Val. Flacc., *Arg.*, i. 736 *sqq.*; *Pap. Par.* 1443, 1463.
[4] Lucan, vi. 696; *Pap. Par.*, 1459.
[5] Lucan, vi. 704; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 479; *Pap. Par.*, 1452.
[6] Lucan, vi. 698; *Pap. Par.*, 1460; *cf.* Lucan, vi. 685; Sen., *Œd.*, 559.
[7] Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 486, Lucan, vi. 702; Sen., *Œd.*, 560.
[8] Lucan, vi. 698 *sq.*; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 481 *sq.*; *Ib.*, 520.
[9] Lucan, vi. 703 *sq.*; *Pap. Par.*, 2795.
[10] Lucan, vi. 695; 730 *sqq.*; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 456 *sq.*, 481 *sqq.*, 506 *sq.*; Hor., *Sat.*, i. 8, 33 *sqq.*; *Pap. Par.*, 1463 *sqq.*; *Ib.*, 1448; Lucian, *Necyom.*, 9.
[11] Æsch., *Pers.*, 640.
[12] Lucan, vi. 745 *sqq.*; Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 516 *sq.*
[13] *Class. Rev.*, XVI., p. 55.
[14] Æsch., *Pers.*, 610 *sqq.*

the words ψυχαγωγοῖς γόοις), and as they sing, the dead monarch gradually appears at the top of his tomb.

It remains to quote Aristophanes' burlesque verses on spirit-raising:[1]

"Beyond the navigable seas,
Among the fierce Antipodes,
There lies a lake, obscure and holy,
Lazy, deep and melancholy,
Solitary, secret, hidden,
Where baths and washing are forbidden.
Socrates, beside the brink,
Summons from the murky sink
Many a disembodied ghost;
And Pisander reach'd the coast
To raise the spirit that he lost;
With a victim strange and new,
A gawky camel which he slew,
Like Ulysses—whereupon
The grizzly sprite of Chærephon
Flitted round him, and appear'd
With his eyebrows and his beard,
Like a strange infernal fowl,
Half a Vampire, half an Owl."

[1] Aristoph., *Av.*, 1553-64, translated by Frere.

IV

DEITIES INVOKED BY MAGICIANS

(i.) Hecate

Hecate is the goddess worshipped above all other deities by all who practise magical arts. She is generally represented in literature as a kind of trinity, being identified with Luna in heaven, with Diana on earth, and with Proserpina in hell, though these three goddesses retain their own individual persons and characteristics. Hecate's parentage varies in different authors. According to Bacchylides she is the child of Night; according to Musæus and Apollodorus her mother was Asteria and her father Jove; Pherecydes says her father was Aristæus, son of Pæon; Lycophron makes her the daughter of Perses; and Hesiod[1] says: "Phœbe bare Asteria, whom Perses led to his house to be called his wife, and she bore Hecate, whom Zeus honoured above all." In the Orphic Hymns, however, we find that Ceres is called the mother of Hecate.

The name Hecate also is variously derived and interpreted. Some would connect it with the Greek ἕκας, "far off" (Latin *procul*),[2] ἑκατος, "far-darting," being an epithet of Apollo. In this case the name is given to the goddess because of the awful and mysterious attributes

[1] Hesiod., *Theog.*, 411 *sqq.*

[2] *Cf.* "procul, O procul este, profani" (Virg. *Æn.*, vi. 258).

which she possessed. Others derive the name from ἕκατον, a hundred, either because she was wont to be appeased with hecatombs,[1] or because she was supposed to possess the power of compelling the ghosts of those who were left unburied to wander for a hundred years.

From her triune divinity she is called variously Triformis,[2] Tergemina,[3] Triceps,[4] Trimorphis,[5] while Apollodorus says that the mullet fish (*trigla*, so called because it breeds three times a year), was sacrificed to Hecate on account of the association of the threefold idea. Another name by which the goddess was known in the underworld was Brimo.[6] The word means something terrible, tremendous and appalling, and was used of Hecate to suggest the dread inspired by her appearance, with her attendant spectres and ghosts. Sophocles, in a lost play, the *Rhizotomi*, introduces a chorus which says: "O sun, thou lord of light, and thou, sacred fire of Hecate,[7] invoked beside beaten paths. Her radiant darts fly in multitudes through Olympus, she appears on earth in sacred spaces where three roads meet, her head crowned with oak, and many coils of serpents on her shoulders."

Hesiod tells us that Zeus honoured Hecate above all

[1] Sacrifices of 100 oxen.
[2] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 94; Hor., *Od.*, iii. 22, 4.
[3] Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 511.
[4] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 194.
[5] Chariclid., Ἀλυσ., i.
[6] Lyc., 1176: Πέρσεως δὲ παρθένος Βριμὼ Τρίμορφος. *Cf.* Prop., ii. 2, 12; Stat., *Silv.*, ii. 3, 38.
[7] Referring to the goddess in her character of Luna, the Moon. Her worship was also associated with that of Bendis, the Thracian Moon Goddess. *Cf.* Kyd, *Spanish Tragedy*:

> "And yonder pale-faced Hecate there, the moon
> Doth give consent to that is done in darkness."

and gave her a share of the earth and the unharvested sea, while she was honoured also in the starry heavens by the deathless gods. "For to this day," says Hesiod,[1] "whenever anyone of men on earth offers rich sacrifices and prays for favour according to custom, he calls upon Hecate. Great honour comes full easily to him whose prayers the goddess receives favourably, and she bestows wealth upon him; for the power surely is with her. For she has authority over all those who were born of Earth and Ocean and received an office. The son of Cronos did her no wrong, nor took anything away of all that was her portion among the former Titan gods; but she holds, as the division was at the first from the beginning, privilege both in earth and in heaven and in sea. Also because she is an only child, the goddess receives not less honour, but much more still, for Zeus honours her. Whom she will she greatly aids and advances; she sits by worshipful kings in judgment, and in the assembly whom she wills is distinguished among the people. And when men arm themselves for battle, then the goddess is at hand to give victory and great glory to whoms o she will. Good is she also when men contend at games, for there, too, the goddess is with them and profits them. And she is good to stand by horsemen, whom she will: and to those whose business is in the grey sea, and who pray to Hecate and the loud-crashing Earth Shaker, easily the glorious goddess gives great catch, and easily takes it away as soon as seen, if so she will. She is good in the byre with Hermes to increase the stock. The droves of kine and wide

[1] Hes., *Theog.*, 416 *sqq.* (translated by H. G. Evelyn-White, Loeb Classical Library).

herds of goats and flocks of fleecy sheep, if she will, she increases from a few, or makes many to be less. So, then, albeit her mother's only child, she is honoured amongst all the deathless gods. And the son of Cronos made her a nurse of the young,[1] who after her saw with their eyes the light of all-seeing Dawn."

Arnobius tells us[2] that Hecate was the mother of Saturn, Ops and Janus by Cœlus, though in the ordinary genealogies we find this place assigned to Terra, and we find that the same attributes are indifferently associated with Earth, Ceres, Hecate and Proserpine in different writers. All, however, connect her with Darkness, and she is popularly described as a dread and mighty goddess ruling over the souls of the dead.[3] She would instruct mortals in the art of magic,[4] or send forth demons and spirits by night from the underworld, who dwelt in tombs or near the blood of murdered persons, or at the cross-roads (whence her name Trivia[5]), and taught sorcery and witchcraft.[6] When she appeared on earth,

[1] Θῆκε δέ μιν Κρονίδης κουροτρόφον (Hes., *Theog.*, 450), and *cf.* *Homeric Epigrams*, XII:

κλῦθί μευ εὐχομένου, Κουροτρόφε, δὸς δὲ γυναῖκα
τῆνδε νέων μὲν ἀναίνεσθαι φιλότητα καὶ εὐνήν.
ἣδ' ἐπιτερπέσθω πολιοκροταφοισι γέρουσιν,
ὧν ὥρη μὲν ἀπήμβλυνται, θυμὸς δὲ μενοινᾷ.

[2] Arn., ii. 71 and iii. 29.

[3] *Cf.* Virg. *Æn.*, vi. 247 *sqq.*, iv. 609; Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 12, 13.

[4] κούρη τις μεγάροισιν ἐνιτρέφετ' Αἰήταο
τὴν Ἑκάτη . περίαλλα θεὰ δαέ τεχνήσασθαι
φάρμαχ' ὅσ' ἠπειρός τε φύει καὶ νήχυτον ὕδωρ.—

[5] Apul., *Apol.*, 31. (Apoll. Rhod., iii. 528-530).

[6] She would also send a kind of hobgoblin or *lamia*, called variously Ἔμπουσα, Ὀνόσκελις, Ὀνοκώλη (the donkey-footed), to terrify travellers. It could assume all kinds of shapes, and loved human flesh. *Cf.* Aristoph., *Eccles.*, 1056; *Ran.*, 293.

she was accompanied by Stygian hounds, whose whining announced her approach; torches gleamed around her, and her hair was decorated with oaken boughs and serpents.[1] In appearance she is described as either three-headed or three-bodied,[2] being partly horse, partly dog, and partly lion or boar. At Athens she had a temple on the Acropolis, close to the Temple of Nikê, called Ἐπιπυργίδια.[3] Statuettes to her were numerous in the city, being set up outside houses or at the cross-roads, where people consulted them as oracles. At every new moon, dishes of food were prepared by rich citizens and set out for her by night at the cross-roads, the food being eaten by beggars, but reported to be devoured by the goddess herself.[4] The chief sacrifices offered to her were dogs,[5] black ewe-lambs, and honey.[6] Before starting on a journey travellers prayed before her shrine.[7]

(ii.)

Other deities invoked by magicians were:

Chaos.—According to Hyginus,[8] Chaos was the son of Darkness, and by her was the father of Night and Erebus. All theogonies agree in making Chaos the origin of all things.[9] Ovid says,[10] "Before the creation of sea,

[1] Apoll. Rhod., iii. 1217 *sqq.*; *cf.* Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 36, and Tibull., i. 2, 52.
[2] *Cf.* Ovid, *Fast.*, i. 141.
[3] The Stratonicensians held a yearly festival, called the Hecatesia, in honour of Hecate.
[4] Aristoph., *Plut.*, 596; Plat., *Sympos.*, vii. 6.
[5] Pausanias (iii. 14, 9) says that the Spartan youths sacrificed a dog to Enyalius, and that no other Greeks used this animal as a sacrificial victim except the Colophonians, who offered it to Hecate.
[6] Apoll. Rhod., iii. 1032.
[7] Aristoph., *Lys.*, 64: ἡ γοῦν θεαγένους / ὡς δεῦρ' ἰοῦσα θοὐκάτειον ἥρετο.
[8] Hyg., *Præf.* [9] Hes., *Theog.*, 116. [10] Ovid, *Met.*, i. 4.

and earth, and sky which covers all, the only expression of Nature (*vultus Naturæ*) in the whole world men called Chaos: an undigested lump." Erichtho invokes Chaos when calling up a spirit of the dead:

> "Chaos huge
> Who striv'st to mix innumerable worlds."[1]

Dido's priestess thrice calls aloud on the hundred gods of Erebus and Chaos,[2] and Circe summons Night and the gods of Night from Erebus and Chaos before transforming Picus into a woodpecker.[3] Thus the word Chaos comes to be identified with that of the underworld generally.

Night.—Night is represented as coming from her abode in Erebus and mounting the heavens in her two-horse chariot "with star-producing reins, and calling back the constellations when the sun had set."[4] Her children are thus given by Cicero:[5] "Æther and Day, and their brothers and sisters who are thus named by the ancient genealogies, Love, Grief, Fear, Toil, Envy, Fate, Old Age, Death, Darkness, Misery, Complaint, Fraud, Obstinacy, the Parcæ, the Hesperides, and Dreams, all of which they relate to have been born of Night and Erebus." She was also the mother of the Furies by Dis,[6] and by some poets she is called the mother of all things, both of gods and men. She was worshipped with great solemnity, and there was a famous statue of her in the temple of Diana at Ephesus. As she was the mother of

[1] Lucan, vi. 696.
[2] Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 510.
[3] *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 404.
[4] Mart. Cap., ii. *init.*; Virg., *Æn.*, v. 721; Tib., ii. 1, 87; Val. Flac., iii. 210; *vide Old Roman Magic*, p. 58.
[5] Cic., *N. D.*, iii. 17.
[6] Virg., *Æn.*, vii. 327.

the Furies a black sheep was the customary victim offered to her; but sometimes a cock was substituted,[1] since it is the cock that heralds the approach of day when night wanes. She was invoked by magicians along with Chaos, Dis, and other gods and goddesses of the underworld.

Dis, Pluto or Stygian Jove,[2] the ruler of the nether regions, was invoked in magical incantations only on special occasions.[3] Hyginus[4] tells us that he possessed a helmet which rendered the wearer invisible, and which he sometimes lent to the other gods. Black victims,[5] particularly black bulls, were sacrificed to him, but their blood was not allowed to be sprinkled on the altar as in the case of other sacrifices, or collected in cups, but was permitted to run down into the earth, as though it could flow down to the lower world and reach the god himself. The number 2 appears to have been sacred to him.[6]

The Furies, called also, by a euphemism, the Eumenides, are said by some to have sprung from the drops of blood which flowed from the wound which Uranus received from his son Saturn. According to others they were the daughters of Earth, and conceived from the blood of Saturn; others make them the daughters of Acheron and Night, or of Pluto and Persephone. They are generally spoken of as three in number, Tisiphone, Megæra and Alecto, but Plutarch mentions only one whom he calls Adrasta, daughter of Zeus and Neces-

[1] Ovid, *Fast.*, i. 455.
[2] Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 638.
[3] Virg., *Æn.*, vi. 252; Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 249.
[4] Hyg., *Ast.*, ii. 12.
[5] Val. Flac., i. 775.
[6] *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 386.

sity. They are usually represented as young goddesses, dressed in black, with torches in their hands and snakes entwined in their hair.

According to Virgil, the Furies were the daughters of Night and Dis.[1] He thus describes them:[2] "Twin monsters there are, called the Awful Ones by name, whom with infernal Megæra the dead of night bore at one single birth, and wreathed them in serpent-like coils, and clothed them with windy wings. They appear at Jove's throne and in the courts of the grim king, and quicken the terrors of wretched men whensoever the lord of heaven deals sicknesses and dreadful death, or sends terror of war upon guilty cities. One of these Jupiter sent swiftly down from the height of heaven, and bade her meet Juturna for an omen. She wings her way, and darts in a whirlwind to earth. Even as an arrow through a cloud darting from the string . . . leaps through the swift shadow whistling and unknown; so sprang and swept to earth the daughter of Night. When she espies the Ilian ranks and Turnus' columns, suddenly shrinking to the shape of a small bird that often sits late by night on tombs or ruinous roofs, and vexes the darkness with her cry, in such change of likeness the monster shrilly passes and passes before Turnus' face, and her wings beat restlessly on his shield." The Furies were considered as ministers of vengeance and carried a whip of serpents and a torch in their hands. They inflicted wars, pestilences and dissensions on the earth, and punished the guilty in Tartarus by various torments. They were much invoked

[1] Virg., *Æn.*, vii. 327.
[2] *Ibid.*, xii. 845 *sqq.*, translated by J. W. Mackail.

by witches and wizards to obtain the infliction of punishment upon those who had angered them.

Mercury is included among the *di magici* because he conducted souls to the underworld, and brought them back when they were summoned to the upper world by enchantments.[1] He was also the sender of dreams, and lulled to sleep or awoke from slumber, by the touch of his magic wand, whomsoever he would.[2] Apuleius, in his defence,[3] says that "Mercury, the conveyer of incantations, Venus alluring the mind, Luna knowing the secrets of night, and Trivia the mistress of the ghosts, are wont to be summoned to the ceremonies of the magicians." Mercury, according to Apuleius, seems to have been chiefly associated with hydromancy, or water magic.[4]

Demogorgon.—In the last resort sorceresses were wont to invoke the great and mysterious deity, Demogorgon, or Demiourgon, as he is sometimes called.[5] Lactantius Placidus, writing on Stat., *Theb.*, iv. 516, says,[6] "The god Demiourgon, whose name it is not permissible to know. But an infinity of philosophers and magicians, the Persians also, confirm that there really is a chief and very great god besides those known gods who are worshipped in temples. . . . It may be that the Magi have seals which they deem to contain the name of the god,

[1] Petr. Arb., 140; Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 242; Stat., *Theb.*, i. 306.
[2] Hom., *Od.*, v. 47, 48; *cf.* Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 242 *sqq.* [3] Apul., *Apol.*, 32.
[4] *Ibid.*, 42. Hydromancy was a fairly common magical practice. *Cf.* St. Aug., *de Civ. Dei*, vii. 35: "Nam et ipse Numa ad quem nullus Dei propheta, nullus sanctus angelus mittebatur, hydromantiam facere compulsus est, ut in aquam videret imagines deorum vel potius ludificationes dæmonum, a quibus audiret, quid in sacris constituere atque observare deberet." [5] Lucan, vi. 730-749.
[6] *Vide Old Roman Magic*, pp. 61, 62.

but his name cannot be known to any mortal." From this passage in Statius it would appear that the person invoking the god Demiourgon had to be girt, and to have a steel weapon in the belt. This custom is contrary to the customary ritual of magic rites.

The Larvæ were the ghosts of the dead who were unable to rest on account of their guilt,[1] or through having met with some violent death or other outrage.[2] They acted as agents to do injury to the living. They were also supposed to take possession of the living and drive them mad.[3]

The Lemures were spectres similar to the Larvæ. Ovid says: "They call the spirits of the silent ones Lemures."[4] They also took possession of haunted houses.[5] The ancient Romans conceived of ghosts as black,[6] and as being larger than human beings: "They say that ghosts larger than men have wandered through the grove."[7]

[1] Apul., *de deo Soc.*; Isid., *Orig.*, viii. 11, 101.
[2] Apul., *Met.*, ix. 29.
[3] Plaut., *Capt.*, III., iv., 66; *Amph.*, II., ii., 145.
[4] Ovid, *Fast.*, v. 483.
[5] Pliny, *Epp.*, vii. 27; *cf.* Ovid, *Fast.*, v. 429.
[6] Pers., v. 185.
[7] Sen., *Œd.*, 175.

V

FAMOUS EXPONENTS OF MAGIC

Medea

(i.)

Medea is, without question, the queen of witches of all ages. She stands out from a background of sinister darkness and mystery, a brilliant, flashing figure, like a gorgeous rainbow in a storm-swept sky. There is nothing of the witch of Endor or of Macbeth's witches about Medea: she is young, beautiful, fascinating, even when she is most repellent. Whether we turn to Apollonius, Ovid, Euripides, Seneca, or Hosidius Geta for her story, she is ever the same dazzling, alluring princess. She is unique in literature; nowhere is there a picture of a woman comparable with her; she has at once all gifts, natural, supernatural, unnatural, subnatural. She has youth, beauty, power, strength, passion, sympathy, remorse; she knows the love of youth and sweetness, wife-love and mother-love; she knows, only too well, the madness of jealousy and hatred; she is capable of wondrous heights, and of most abysmal depths. Euripides felt her power, her quick changes of mood, her tenderness, her anguish; his sympathies are all with her, none with Jason; her triumphant exit in her winged chariot is a kind of passionate justification of her actions. The father of Medea was Æetes, the wizard king of Colchis. According to Hesiod and Hyginus, her mother

was Idyea, but other authorities call her Ephyre, Asterodia, Antiope, and Neæra, while Medea is even said to have been the daughter of Hecate.

Grandchild of the Sun, she must, like Circe, have diffused a natural radiancy and beauty from the very fire she inherited in her veins. She enters Apollonius' story[1] as Hecate's priestess, passing all her days in the goddess' temple, and thereby perfecting herself in the knowledge and use of magic.[2] Love does not enter her life till Jason comes, in quest of the golden fleece, jealously guarded by her father Æetes; but at the hero's approach, Eros draws his bow and aims his arrow straight at Medea's heart, and her soul melts with the sweet pain of her wound.

In the pages of Apollonius, Medea, despite her powers, is a mere puppet in the hands of Hera, who, from the time that she keeps her in the palace on the day of Jason's arrival, is responsible for all that happens. First Chalciope, Medea's elder sister, begs her to help the stranger, and again, while Medea hesitates, weeping as she kneels before the casket containing her precious drugs, it is Hera who breaks down her temptation to eat of a poisonous herb and so end her care, and determines her to aid the hero.

So Medea rises with the dawn, and takes from her casket a drug called the charm of Prometheus, such that if

[1] Apoll. Rhod., iii. 251 (adapted from R. C. Seaton's translation, Loeb Classical Library).

[2] The name Medea belongs to the family of words connected with medicine, and means "wise woman." Originally this wisdom seems to have consisted chiefly in a knowledge of herbs and charms, and the healing properties associated with them. Similarly *ἰατρός* may be derived from *ἰός*, poison, from the skill which the physician possessed to administer either the bane or its antidote.

a man anointed his body therewith, after first appeasing the Maiden-goddess, Hecate, with sacrifice, no stroke of brazen sword or flame of fire could hurt him. The herb had sprung up on Mount Caucasus from the first drop of blood that fell from the claws of the eagle sent by Zeus to tear out Prometheus' liver; its flower stood a cubit above the ground, yellow like the Corycian crocus, and rising on twin stalks; its root in the earth was like newly cut flesh. Medea, clad in a dusky garment, at dead of night, had gathered the juice of it long ago to make the charm, after first bathing in seven ever-flowing streams, and calling seven times on Brimo, queen of the underworld.

This charm Medea places in her girdle, mounts her chariot with two companions, and drives through the city to Hecate's shrine. Hither soon comes Jason, led by Argus, Chalciope's eldest son and Medea's nephew. Medea is singing, though faltering in her song with very longing for the coming of the man she loves. Nor, when she sees him, can she speak, but stands in silence, watching him. Jason is the first to essay speech, in words that do not ring altogether true. There is a hint of fear, a suggestion that but for his need of her help, which he implores by Hecate herself, and by Zeus, the god of strangers and suppliants, he would have naught to do with her. But this is lost upon Medea. From her girdle she eagerly produces the charm, which Jason almost snatches from her in his excitement and triumph, and proceeds to give him instructions for its use. He is bidden to watch for the time when the night is parted in twain, and then to bathe in the river, and alone, clad in dusky raiment, dig a pit. Therein must he slay a ewe,

and sacrifice it whole, heaping high the pyre on the very edge of the pit, and propitiating Hecate with offering of honey. After seeking the goddess' protection, he is to retreat from the pyre, heedless of the sound of approaching feet or baying hounds, and at dawn steep the charm in water and anoint his body therewith. Such are her directions; but at the end she breaks down, and with many tears begs Jason not to forget her, even when he is far away. And to her weeping he replies: "Thou shalt spread our couch in our bridal chamber; and naught shall come between our love till the doom of death fold us around."

During the day Jason makes his preparations for the magic rites which he must perform in the night-time. So soon as the stars of Helice have set, he goes forth stealthily to a lonely spot and bathes in the sacred stream, wrapping himself in a dark robe, given him long before by Hypsipyle of Lemnos—a relic of another love. Then he digs a pit, a cubit in depth, and piles up billets of wood, over which he cuts the throat of a sheep, and places the body thereon. He sets fire to the logs and pours over them mingled libations, calling on Hecate Brimo to aid him in his task. The dread goddess hears his prayer, and comes forth, garlanded with oaken boughs entwined with serpents, with hell-hounds baying at her side, and the gleam of torches around her. At her step the meadow-land trembles, and the river nymphs shriek. But mindful of Medea's warning, Jason heeds not the apparition, but returns to his comrades, and anoints his body with the charm.

Thus does Jason, by Medea's help, perform the tasks set him by Æetes, and yokes the fire-breathing bulls,

and sows the dragon's teeth. Nor does Æetes fail to suspect that his daughters have been the stranger's accomplices; and again Medea would have ended her cares with poison, had not Hera put it into her heart to flee with Chalciope's sons to Jason's protection.

The Greeks, whose ships lie moored by the river's bank, receive her eagerly, when she promises to aid them in carrying off the fleece from the dragon's lair, and Jason rejoices at her coming, and promises her safety and wedlock.

At Medea's bidding they row straight to the grove where the golden fleece hangs, and put ashore. There lies the dragon, coiled before the great oak-tree which holds the fleece; he stretches out his long neck, and hisses. But Medea stands before him, calling upon the god of Sleep to charm the monster, and invoking Hecate, queen of the underworld. The serpent, beguiled by her chanting, relaxes his long body, though he raises his head to snap her in his jaws. Then Medea takes a fresh-cut sprig of juniper, dips it in her magic drugs, and sprinkles the dragon's eyes, singing her incantation all the while. The scent of the drug casts sleep around them, and the monster's head sinks on the ground in slumber. Then Jason snatches the fleece, while Medea smears her drugs over the scaly head, and back through the grove they go with their booty. On reaching the ship they hasten to row from the river, with Medea in their midst, for they know well that Æetes will pursue them, and try to bar their passage from the river to the sea.

Already Medea's deeds have become known in the city, and Æetes and all the Colchians rush down to the river-bank, just in time to see the ship *Argo* drawing away to

the sea, sped on by her stalwart rowers. Then Æetes utters terrible curses, and bids his men lay their hands on the maiden and bring her back, else will it go hard with all of them. Whereat the Colchians launch their ships in pursuit of Jason and Medea.

But meantime Hera sends a swift wind which carries the fugitives to the shores of the Paphlagonians, to the mouth of the river Halys, where Medea bids the Greeks land and offer sacrifice to Hecate. The goddess gives them a happy portent, for a trail of heavenly light appears before them to show them where they may go. But as they sail, they find the islands that block the way to the open sea thronged by the Colchians, and their passage barred. Then the followers of Jason would have come to terms, giving up Medea and retaining the fleece; but Medea, realising their intention, reproaches Jason with bitter tears, accusing him of breaking the oath by which he swore to protect her. She then suggests a horrible plan whereby they may win clear away from the Colchians. She promises to beguile her brother, Absyrtus, to come alone to speak with her, so that Jason can spring upon him and slay him, and, in the confusion ensuing among the Colchians, the Greeks may slip away.

Jason agrees to the plot, and prepares presents with which to deceive Absyrtus. Medea prevails upon the heralds to induce her brother to come to the temple of the goddess by night, intimating that she has a cunning plan to unfold to him whereby he may take home with him the golden fleece. The Greeks, in accordance with her instructions, leave her on the shore of the island of Artemis, while Jason lies in ambush close at hand. Hith-

er comes Absyrtus, alone, to greet his sister, and while they talk together Jason leaps forth and smites Absyrtus with his gleaming sword, whereat Medea turns away her head that she may not see her brother's blood. Jason cuts off the hands and feet of his slain foe, and three times licks up some blood, and three times spits it forth from his teeth, the usual rite by which a slayer atones for a murder. While he buries the body, Medea raises a blazing torch as a sign to the Greeks that all is well, and at the signal they fall upon the Colchian ships and slaughter the crew, destroying them like a flame. Then once more they put to sea and sail away to the sacred isle of Electra.

Once again before the Argonauts reach Hellas Medea's powers of magic are called into requisition.[1] As they approach Crete, they are prevented from landing by Talos, the guardian of the island, a giant whose body is made entirely of bronze, except for a small vein by his ankle, which is covered by a thin skin. The Greeks are anxious to land in order to replenish their water supply; but Talos breaks off great rocks from the cliffs and hurls them into the sea to prevent the ship from drawing to the shore. Then Medea, holding the fold of her purple robe over her cheeks, mounts the deck, with Jason by her side, and invokes the Death spirits, the swift hounds of Hell. Kneeling in supplication, three times she calls upon them with songs, three times with prayers, while she turns her hostile glance upon Talos, bewitching his eyes. And while the giant heaves a mighty rock into the sea, he grazes his ankle on a pointed crag, and the blood-like ichor gushes from the vein. For a while he

[1] Apoll. Rhod., iv. 1661-1692.

ſtands, swaying to and fro, and then falls ſtrengthless, with a mighty thud, upon the ground. Thus the Greeks land, and pass the night upon the island; with the dawn they build a shrine to Minoan Athene, draw water from the springs, and put to sea again.

(ii.)

Ovid does not give any detailed account of the magic rites employed by Medea in helping Jason to yoke the bulls or secure the fleece. He merely says that Jason received enchanted herbs from her, and learnt the use of them; while, during his conteſt with the earth-born warriors that sprang from the dragon's teeth, Medea chanted more spells for fear the herbs should lack sufficient power to help him. According to Ovid it appears to be Jason who sprinkles the dragon with water from the ſtreams of Lethe, thrice repeating some sleep charm, such as would calm even the sea and ſtay swift rivers.
A very full account, however, is given by Ovid of the magic employed by Medea to reſtore to youth Æson, father of Jason, after she has become his wife in Hellas. When the moon is full, Medea, barefoot, with ſtreaming hair, and clad in flowing robes, wanders alone in the mid-night silence beneath the glimmering ſtars. Stretching her arms aloft, she turns thrice about, thrice sprinkles water from the river upon her head, and thrice utters wailing cries. Then she kneels and prays.
"O Night, faithful preserver of myſteries, and ye bright ſtars, whose golden beams with the moon succeed the fires of day; thou three-formed Hecate, who knoweſt our undertakings and comeſt to our aid; ye spells and arts that the wise men use; and thou, O Earth, who doſt

provide the wise men with thy potent herbs; ye breezes and winds, ye mountains and ſtreams and pools; all ye gods of the groves, all ye gods of the night; be with me now. With your help, when I have willed it, the ſtreams have run back to their fountain heads, while the banks wondered; I lay the swollen, and ſtir up the calm seas by my spell; I drive the clouds and bring on the clouds; the winds I dispel and summon; I break the jaws of serpents with my incantations; living rocks and oaks I root up from their own soil; I move the foreſts, I bid the mountains shake, the earth to rumble, and ghoſts to come forth from their tombs. Thee, also, Luna, do I draw from the sky, though the clanging bronze of Temesa ſtrive to aid thy throes; even the chariot of the Sun, my grandsire, pales at my song; Aurora pales at my poisons. You dulled the bulls' flames at my command; you pressed under the curved plough those necks which had endured no weight. You turned the savage onslaught of the serpent-born band againſt themselves; you lulled the watcher who knew no sleep, and beguiling the defender sent the golden prize back to the cities of Greece. Now I have need of juices by whose aid old age may be renewed and may turn back to the bloom of youth and regain its early years. And you will give them; for not in vain is my car at hand, drawn by winged dragons."[1]

The chariot appears, Medea gets in, and is whirled aloft in the air, guiding her ſteeds to the chalky regions of Thessaly. She proceeds to gather herbs from Ossa and Pelion, from Othrys, Pindus and Olympus, tearing up

[1] Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 191 *sqq.* (translated by F. J. Miller, Loeb Classical Library).

some by the root, and cutting others with the curved blade of her bronze sickle. Many grasses she takes from the banks of the Apidanus, the Amphrysus, the Enipeus, Peneus, Spercheus and Lake Bœbe, while from Eubœan Anthedon she takes a herb that gives long life.[1]

For nine days and nights she travels over all lands in her dragon-drawn chariot, nor does she feed her steeds except on the scent of her herbs. On returning home she builds two altars of turf before the palace gates, one on the right to Hecate, and one on the left to Youth. These she decorates with vervain and forest boughs; and close by she digs two trenches in the earth. Plunging her knife into the throat of a black sheep, she drenches the ditches with its blood. Then she pours in goblets of wine and milk still warm, muttering incantations, and calling upon the deities of the Earth, and the King of the Shades below. After she has appeased all the divinities with prayers, she orders the aged body of Aeson to be brought out into the open. She casts him by her spells into a deep sleep, and lays him on her magic herbs. She bids Jason and all the attendants withdraw, that their uninitiated eyes may not regard her mysteries. Left alone, with streaming hair, like a Bacchante, Medea circles round the blazing altars, dips cleft sticks into the black pools of blood, and kindles them at the altar flames. Thrice then does she purify the old man with fire, thrice with water, and thrice with sulphur. Meanwhile she has a strong mixture boiling and frothing in a cauldron,

[1] This, according to Ovid, is the herb that afterwards was plucked by Glaucus, a fisherman (*cf.* p. 93), who noticed that some fish he had laid on the grass revived, and jumped back into the sea. Glaucus ate some of the grass and immediately went mad, threw himself into the water, and was turned into a sea-god (Ovid, *Met.*, xiii. 918 *sqq.*).

and she now casts into it the roots which she gathered in the Thessalian valleys, seeds, flowers and strong juices. She adds also pebbles sought in the furthest East, sand washed by the ebbing tide, hoar-frost gathered under the full moon, the wings and flesh of an ill-omened screech-owl, the entrails of a werewolf, the scaly skin of a Cinyphian water-snake, the liver of a long-lived stag, and the head of a crow nine centuries old.[1] These and a thousand other nameless things she puts into the pot, and stirs them up with a branch of an olive tree, long since sere and dry. Suddenly the bough grows green and burgeons with leaves, and is soon heavy with olives. And wherever the froth of the cauldron bubbles over and touches the ground, green grass and flowers spring up. Then Medea draws her sword and cuts the old man's throat; she lets the old blood gush out, and then fills his veins with the contents of the pot. Thereupon Æson's hair and beard immediately become black, his wrinkled skin fills out, and the strength of youth fills his limbs. The restoration is complete.

But Medea has tasted once more of her old power, and she cannot lay aside her magic. A scheme presents itself to her ready brain for removing Pelias, brother of Æson, and usurper of the kingdom, from Jason's path. She induces the daughters of Pelias to suggest that she shall rejuvenate their father in the same way as Æson. To convince them of her power she produces an aged ram, slits his throat with her Thessalian knife, and plunges him into the brazen cauldron, adding her potent juices. In a moment out jumps a bleating lamb that frisks away in search of milk.

[1] A stag was said to live four times and a crow nine times as long as man.

Pelias' daughters consent to the experiment being tried on their father, but Medea makes ready pure water, and uses her enchantments only to put the king and his attendants into a death-like sleep. She bids the daughters themselves plunge their knives into the old man's throat, and then, despite his piteous struggles, she places him in the pot of boiling water, wherein he speedily dies. To escape punishment for this deed, she mounts once more in her dragon-drawn chariot, and wings her way through the air until finally she reaches Athens and is given shelter and marriage by Ægeus, the king. But Medea, very different now from the half-frightened, half-daring maiden, whose love Jason won in Colchis, plots the destruction of Ægeus' son Theseus, who arrives in the kingdom unrecognised by his father. She mixes for him a cup of poison which she has brought with her from the Scythian shores. This poison, called aconite, according to Ovid, is supposed to have sprung up from the foam with which Cerberus, the three-headed dog of Tartarus, bespattered the fields when Heracles dragged him up to the daylight, near the cavern of Acherusia. This poison Medea contrives for Ægeus himself to offer to his son; but at the crucial moment the father recognises Theseus by his ivory sword-hilt, and strikes the cup from his lips before he can drink of the deadly draught. Medea once more escapes into the clouds which she raises by her witch-songs.

This is the end of Medea so far as the *Metamorphoses* is concerned. We have, however, two more pictures of her from Ovid's pen, both from his *Heroides*. In the first,[1] Hypsipyle, Jason's first deserted mistress, writes

[1] Ovid, *Her.*, vi. 83.

to her lover, bemoaning that an unlooked-for enemy has dealt her her death wound. "'Tis not by her good looks," she writes, "nor by her goodness that she wins thee, but she knows incantations, and cuts poisonous herbs with charmed knife. She essays to bring down the struggling Moon from her course, and to plunge the Sun's steeds in darkness. She bridles the waters and stays the flowing streams; she moves forests and living rocks from their places. She wanders through tombs with streaming hair, and collects bones from the pyres still warm. She dooms men to death in their absence, fashions waxen figures of them, and drives the fine needle into the tortured heart, and does more things of which I am not fain to know. Ill is it to seek by magic herbs for love which goodness and beauty should win." This picture is a particularly colourless one, and is simply a stereotyped description of any witch. In another letter, however, Ovid gives us a glimpse of Medea in Corinth, deserted by Jason. She writes to him piteously, reminding him that she has lost father, kingdom, country, and husband, and that husband was more than all to her. "I who could subdue fierce flames by my magic potions," she moans, "cannot escape the fire of my own love. My charms and herbs fail me, Hecate and her rites avail me naught. My skill is of more use to anyone in the world than to myself." Only revenge is left. The story of this vengeance is given most completely by Seneca in his tragedy, though Hosidius Geta also deals with the incident in detail. In Euripides the magic element is more suppressed, and we have no picture of Medea engaged in any rite or incantation. She is the wronged woman, but not the wronged enchantress; the

sending of the poisoned robe to Glauce has little more significance than Deianeira's gift to Heracles.

In Seneca's tragedy, however, we realise the magic power of Medea from the very beginning, for in the Prologue the key to the situation is given when she bemoans that she is impotent now, unless she has recourse once more to her old sorceries, long since laid aside, and resolves to wreak her vengeance on Glauce by their aid. The nurse foresees what is about to happen.

"My spirit quakes with horror," she says;[1] "some great disaster is at hand. . . . For now that with maddened steps she has gone out and come to her baleful shrine, she lavishes all her stores and brings forth whatever e'en she herself long has dreaded, and marshals her whole train of evil powers, things occult, mysterious, hidden; and, supplicating the grim altar with her left hand,[2] she summons destructive agencies, whatever burning Libya's sands produce, what Taurus, stiff with arctic cold, holds fast in his everlasting snows, and all monstrous things. Drawn by her magic incantations, the scaly brood leave their lairs and come to her. Here a savage snake drags its huge length along. . . . When she had summoned forth the whole tribe of serpents, she assembled her evil store of baleful herbs. Whatever trackless Eryx produces on his rocky slopes; plants that grow on heights clothed in unbroken winter, the heights of Caucasus, bespattered with Prometheus' gore; . . . all plants that bloom with deadly flower, and all whose juices breed cause of death in their twisted roots—all these she handled. Hæmonian Athos contributed these baneful

[1] Sen., *Med.*, 670 (translated by Frank Justus Miller, Loeb Classical Library).

[2] *Cf. infra*, p. 91.

herbs, these mighty Pindus, . . . these plants felt the knife while Phœbus was making ready the day; the shoot of that was clipped at midnight, while this was severed by finger-nail with muttered charm. She seizes death-dealing herbs, squeezes out serpents' venom, and with these mingles unclean birds, the heart of a boding owl, and a hoarse screech-owl's vitals cut out alive. Other objects the mistress of evil arts lays out, arranged in separate heaps; in some is the ravening power of fire; in others numbing frost's icy cold. She adds to her poisons words no less fearsome than they. But listen, her frenzied step has sounded, and she chants her incantations. All nature shudders as she begins her song."
(At this point Medea enters, hymning an incantation).
"I supplicate the throng of the silent, and you, funereal gods, murky Chaos and shadowy Dis' dark dwelling-place, the abysses of dismal Death, girt by the banks of Tartarus. Leaving your punishments, ye ghosts, haste to the new nuptials; let the wheel stop that is whirling his body, and Ixion stand on earth. . . . Now, summoned by my sacred rites, do thou, Orb of the night, put on thy most evil face and come, threatening in all thy forms. For thee, loosing my hair from its bands after the manner of my people, with bare feet have I trod the secret groves and called forth rain from the dry clouds; I have driven the seas back to their lowest depths, and the Ocean, his tides outdone, and in like manner with Heaven's law confounded, the world has seen both sun and stars together, and you, ye bears, have bathed in the forbidden sea. The order of the seasons has changed; the summer land has blossomed 'neath my magic song, and by my compelling Ceres has seen

harveſt in winter time; swift Phasis has turned his waters backward to their source, and Hiſter, divided into many mouths, has checked his boiſterous ſtreams and flowed sluggishly in all his beds. The waves have roared, the mad sea swelled, though the winds were ſtill; the heart of the ancient woods has loſt its shadows, when the bright day has come back to them at the commandment of my voice; Phœbus has halted in mid-heaven, and the Hyades, moved by my incantations, totter to their fall. The hour is at hand, O Phœbe, for thy sacred rites." (She offers various gifts to Hecate.) "To thee I offer these wreaths wrought with bloody hands, each entwined with nine serpent coils; to thee, these serpent limbs which rebellious Typhœus wore . . . in this is the blood which Nessus, that traitor ferryman, beſtowed as he expired. With these ashes sank down the pyre on Œta which drank in the poisoned blood of Hercules. Here thou seeſt the billet of a pious siſter but impious mother, Althæa, the avenger. These feathers the Harpy left in her trackless lair when she fled from Zetes. Add to these the quills of the wounded Stymphalian bird which felt the darts of Lerna. You have given forth your voice, ye altars; I see my tripods shaken by the favouring deity. I see Trivia's swift gliding car, not as when, radiant, with full face, she drives the livelong night, but as when, ghaſtly, with mournful aſpect, harried by Thessalian threats, she skirts with nearer rein the edge of heaven. So do thou wanly shed from thy torch a gloomy light through the air; terrify the peoples with new dread, and let precious Corinthian bronzes resound, Dictynna, to thy aid. To thee on the altars' bloody turf we perform thy solemn rites; to thee a torch

caught up from the midſt of a funeral pyre has illumed the night; to thee, tossing my head and with bended neck, I have uttered my magic words; for thee a fillet, lying in funeral fashion, binds my flowing locks; to thee is brandished the gloomy branch from the Stygian ſtream; to thee with bared breaſt will I as a mænad smite my arms with the sacrificial knife. Let my blood flow upon the altars; accuſtom thyself, my hand, to draw the sword and endure the sight of beloved blood." (She slashes her arm and lets the blood flow upon the altar.) " Self-smitten have I poured forth the sacred ſtream. But if thou complaineſt that too often thou art called on by my prayers, pardon, pardon, I pray; the cause, O Perses' daughter, of my too oft calling on thy bows is one and the same ever, Jason. Do thou now poison Creusa's robe that, when she has donned it, the creeping flame may consume her inmoſt marrow. Within this tawny gold " (she takes a casket in her hands) "lurks fire, darkly hid; Prometheus gave it me, even he who expiates with ever-growing liver his theft from heaven, and taught me by his art how to ſtore up its powers. Mulciber hath also given me fires which subtly lurk in sulphur; and bolts of living flame I took from my kinsman, Phæthon. I have gifts from Chimæra's middle part, I have flames caught from the bull's scorched throat, which, well mixed with Medusa's gall, I have bidden to guard their bane in silence. Give ſting to my poisons, Hecate, and in my gifts keep hidden the seeds of fire. Let them cheat the sight, let them endure the touch; let burning fire penetrate to the heart and veins; let her limbs melt and her bones consume in smoke, and with her blazing locks let the bride outshine her wed-

ding torches. My prayers are heard: thrice has bold Hecate bayed aloud, and has raised her accursed fire with its baleful light. Now all my power is marshalled; hither call my sons that by their hands thou mayst send these costly gifts unto the bride. Go, go, my sons, born of an ill-starred mother, win to yourselves by means of gifts and much beseechings your mistress and stepmother."

A further account of Medea's rites in preparing her rival's bridal gift is given in Hosidius Geta's[1] tragedy, *Medea*. The messenger speaks, and relates how Medea, with funereal garlands on her head, robe ungirt, and bare of foot, sprinkles the altars and hearths in the night-time with honey juice, poppy mixture, and water from Avernus' streams. Upon her brazier she burns perfumed cedar, squill, hellebore and sulphur, invoking Hecate, and calling upon the god whose name cannot be spoken.[2] Thereupon the earth trembles, lightnings flash, there is a wailing of voices, the sound of footsteps, the swish of lashes; dogs howl through the gloom, and the goddess draws near. The Fury, Alecto, arises,

[1] "Hosidius Geta seems to be the earliest cento maker whose production is still extant. Nothing is known about him, beyond what Tertullian says (*de præscrip. hæret.*, 39) that he had lately made up a tragedy called *Medea* entirely out of materials extracted from the works of Vergil. He must therefore have lived about the end of the second century A.D. . . . In the middle ages Vergil came to be considered a kind of master magician. . . . This may have been due to the father of Vergil having, according to the *Life of Vergil* ascribed to Donatus, married the daughter of a certain Magius or Magus. Among other works of magic ascribed to him, he was said to have made and set up at Rome a brazen statue for each Roman province. Each of these statues was provided with a magic bell, and if a province meditated a revolt, the statue which represented it struck its bell" (J. J. Mooney).

[2] The god Demogorgon; *vide* p. 65.

steeped in Gorgonean poisons, and brandishing her torch; in answer to Medea's prayer that she will "sow the crimes of war," she promises her aid, and departs with hissing, snaky wings. Medea, left alone, turns her attention to a crown she is making, a double crown, with gems and gold and serpents' scales inset, a gift for Glauce, Jason's new bride.

Later, the messenger describes Glauce's reception of the present. As she takes the crown, fire is scattered on her dress, flame spreads over her hair and devours her limbs. Her companions fly in terror, seeking shelter and leaving the unhappy princess to her fate; while Medea harnesses her dragons to her chariot and wings her way into the clouds.

Undoubtedly Seneca's interpretation of Medea is more sympathetic than that of Euripides. There is, to begin with, the very strong suggestion in the Prologue that Medea returns to her magic arts only as a last resource, and the lengthy description of the preparations for the rites, and the ceremonial involved, is intended to bring the enchantress rather than the woman on to the stage. This side of Medea Euripides rather deliberately relegates to the background. Professor Gilbert Murray would rob her almost of all charm: "It is not only that her beauty has begun to fade," he says;[1] "not only that she is set in surroundings which vaguely belittle and weaken her, making her no more a bountiful princess, but only an ambiguous and much criticised foreigner. Her very devotion of love for Jason, now turned to hatred, shows itself to have been always of that some-

[1] *Vide* introduction to *The Medea of Euripides*, translated by Gilbert Murray, p. ix.

what rank and ugly sort to which such a change is natural." Yet love such as Medea knew was a passion linked very closely with hate, as all fierce, undivided, uncontrolled love must ever be, but it was the only kind of love which her wild, untamed heart could know. It is useless to judge Medea by modern standards, yet even so she is at least deserving of pity. Euripides does not attempt to justify Jason's behaviour, and the true Jason of the play is every whit as despicable as Admetus in the *Alcestis*.

From Hyginus[1] we learn that Medea came as an exile to Athens, and married Ægeus, bearing him a son, Medus. But later, the priest of Diana insisted that he could not offer pure sacrifice to the goddess while a witch inhabited the land, and Medea was banished. She then returned in her winged chariot to Colchis, but on her way passed through Absoris, where was the tomb of her brother Absyrtus, murdered by Jason. The people of Absoris were overrun with serpents, and Medea, at their request, collected the snakes, and flung them into her brother's tomb, where they remained imprisoned; or, if any escaped, it was quickly killed.

Such, then, is the Medea legend—a medley of brilliant colours, with gloomy backgrounds, queer flashes of beauty, abysmal depths of horror. She progresses from the wild, shy, half-tamed creature of the woods, devotee of Hecate, mistress of a power she but half knows—through the mazes of her frenzied love for Jason and the awakening realisation of all that her magic can achieve, to the ambitious, cruel, disappointed mistress of a Grecian prince, abandoned and alone, in a foreign land.

[1] Chap. VI.

Her exit from the stage in her fiery chariot, in Euripides' play, is a fit end to her flaming life: she was a thing of beauty once, a beauty of reds and golds and purples, yet with marring streaks of lurid blues and greys, and great splashes of ebony blacks. No author attempts a complete character: it is only from the aggregate of the legends that we can realise the wonder of her charm, and the depth of her evil powers.

Circe

After Medea, Circe[1] is the most attractive of the sorceresses of ancient literature. She is said by some to be the daughter of Sol (or Helios) and Perse, the Nymph, and sister of the wizard Æetes, Medea's father.[2] Circe, therefore, stands in the somewhat unromantic relationship of aunt to Medea. Her grandfather on her mother's side was Oceanus, and her sister was Pasiphae, wife of Minos, King of Crete, and mother of the Minotaur. She married a Sarmatian prince of Colchis, but soon poisoned him in order to obtain his throne. She was consequently banished by her subjects, and taken by her father to an island called Ææa, off the coast of Italy. Others, however, make her home a promontory in Latium, afterwards called Circeii from the name of the goddess.

Circe does not seem to have practised magic on any-

[1] *Cf.*:

> "Who knows not Circe;
> The daughter of the sun, whose charmèd cup
> Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
> And downward fell into a grovelling swine?"
>
> (Milton, *Comus.*)

[2] "Circe herself—what other is she but a Persian? Her dwelling is in the distant East, and she is the daughter of the Sun and Πέρση or Περσηΐς" (W. Headlam, *Class. Rev.*, XVI., p. 55).

thing like so extensive a scale as Medea, but rather to have specialised in the art of metamorphosis, her particular delight being to transform men into swine.[1] The story of how Odysseus, in the course of his wandering, came to her island, is told at some length in the *Odyssey*.[2] On landing, he divides his company into two parties, with Eurylochus as leader of one, and himself of the other. They draw lots as to which should explore the island; the lot falls to Eurylochus, and he and his twenty-two companions, with many tears, set out. They find Circe's halls in the forest glades, while around the palace wolves and lions are roaming, bewitched by Circe's evil drugs. Inside, they hear Circe singing in a sweet voice, as she fares to and fro before the loom, and, on their calling out to her, she comes forth, opens the shining doors and commands them to enter. All obey except Eurylochus, who guesses that some treason is on foot. She leads them in, bids them sit down on chairs and high seats, and makes them a mess of cheese, barley-meal, yellow honey and Pramnian wine,[3] with which she mixes harmful drugs which induce forgetfulness. When they have eaten and drunk, she smites them with her wand and immediately they take on the bristles and shape of swine, though still retaining their mind as before. Circe pens them in the sty, and flings them acorns and cornel berries to eat. The cautious Eurylochus, seeing what has happened, hastens back to Odysseus and the rest of the company

[1] Aristoph., *Plut.*, 302.
[2] Odyss., x. 135 *sqq.*; *cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 273 *sqq.*
[3] *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 272, where the mess consists of parched barley, honey, wine, and curds with pressed milk.

on the seashore. When he hears the ſtory, Odysseus immediately sets out to help them, and encounters Hermes near Circe's halls, in the guise of a young man. He greets Odysseus, and gives him a herb, called Moly, black at the roots, but white of flower, which will render him proof againſt Circe's charms. He advises him, when Circe ſtrikes him with her magic wand, to draw his sword, and refuse to sheathe it until she has sworn to him a great oath by the blessed gods to do him no hurt. Odysseus, accordingly, takes the herb, and, approaching the palace, calls to the goddess, who brings him in and sets him on a chair. She mixes him another of her potions, with a charm among the ingredients, and ſtrikes him with her wand, bidding him go to the ſty with the reſt of his comrades. But Odysseus draws his sword and springs upon her, forcing the mighty oath from her, as Hermes had warned him, before he will put up his sword. Then Circe passes out through the halls, with her wand in her hand, and, opening the doors of the ſty, drives forth Odysseus' companions in the shape of swine nine years old. As they ſtand before them, the goddess anoints each one with another charm, and ſtraightway the briſtles drop from their limbs, and they become men again, younger, more handsome, and taller than before.

Then Circe bids Odysseus fetch his comrades from the shore, and despite Eurylochus' attempts to dissuade him, he does the goddess' bidding. Circe bathes and anoints the reſt of the company with olive oil, and clothes them in thick mantles and doublets, and makes ready a feaſt in the halls. There they all live with the goddess for a year, feaſting on abundant flesh and sweet

wine. But when Odysseus feels that he must resume his journey, Circe reveals to him that he must go down to the dwelling of Hades and Persephone, and seek the spirit of Theban Teiresias, the blind soothsayer, and tells him how to get there.

The breeze of the north wind will bear his vessel on her way,[1] and when he has crossed the stream of Ocean, he must beach his ship, and go to the gloomy house of Hades. Where Pyriphlegethon and Cocytus flow into Acheron there is a rock, and here Odysseus must dig a trench, a cubit in length and breadth, and about it pour a drink-offering to all the dead, first with mead, next with sweet wine, and the third time with water, and sprinkle white meal thereon. Then he must entreat, with many prayers, the faint heads of the dead, and promise the sacrifice of a barren heifer on his return to Ithaca, to fill the pyre with treasure, and to offer to Teiresias alone an unblemished black ram. After these prayers he is to sacrifice a ram and a black ewe, bending their heads towards Erebus, but with his own face towards the shore of the river. Then will the spirits of the dead come forth, and his comrades must flay the sheep and pray to Hades and Persephone, while Odysseus himself keeps back the spirits, at the sword's point, from the blood of the slain animals, until Teiresias himself comes to him. Then will the seer tell him of his return journey, where he must fare, and how he may cross the teeming deep.

With such counsel does Circe speed Odysseus on his way; then she fastens a ram and a black ewe to his ship, and sends a favourable breeze to fill his sails.

[1] *Od.*, x. 507.

Medea and Jason visit Circe

For the next picture of Circe we turn to Apollonius Rhodius.[1] Medea and Jason, after the murder of Medea's brother, Absyrtus, come to Circe to seek expiation. They find her bathing her head in the salt-sea spray, for she has been troubled with dreams in the night-time. The walls of her palace seemed to her to be running with blood, and flames to be devouring all her magic herbs. Then she extinguished the flames with the blood, gathering it in her hands, and awoke. Thus Medea and Jason find her bathing, to wash away the terrors of the night, and around her throng curious beasts, different from the beasts of the wild, nor yet like to men in body, but with a medley of limbs. She bids her visitors follow her back to the palace, and entering her halls, would seat them on brightly burnished chairs, but Medea and Jason hasten to the hearth and sit there in silence, after the manner of wretched suppliants. Medea hides her face in her hands, and Jason plants his sword in the ground, and keeps his eyes cast downwards. Then Circe straightway becomes aware of the guilt of murder, and begins to offer the sacrifice by which suppliants are cleansed from sin. First she holds above their heads the young of a sow whose teats are still swollen with the fruit of the womb, and, severing its neck, sprinkles their hands with the blood; then she pours libations, calling on Zeus the Cleanser, the protector of murder-stained suppliants. And the Naiads, the nymphs who attend on Circe, carry forth the defilements from the palace. Meanwhile the goddess continues to stand by the hearth, burning atonement cakes

[1] Apoll. Rhod., iv. 660 *sqq.* (adapted from R. C. Seaton's translation, Loeb Classical Library).

without wine, praying that she may ſtay the terrible Furies, and that Zeus himſelf may be propitious, even if they implore his grace with hands ſtained with the blood of a kinsman.

After the sacrifice is finished, she raises the suppliants from the hearth and seats them on well-polished seats, and sitting opposite them, asks them their business and their need of her; as she ponders, she remembers her hideous dreams, and longs to hear the voice of the maiden. Then Medea tells her all, except of the murder of Absyrtus; yet she cannot deceive the goddess. Nevertheless, Circe pities the maiden, and says, "Poor child, thou haſt planned an evil and shameful return, nor wilt thou escape the wrath of Æetes. For soon will he fare to Hellas to avenge the murder of his son, for intolerable deeds haſt thou done. Yet since thou art my suppliant and kinswoman, I will devise no further ill againſt thee; but begone from my halls. Kneel not to me at my hearth, for never will I approve thy counsels and thy shameful flight." Then Medea, in anguish, covers her eyes with her veil, and pours forth a bitter lament, till Jason takes her by the hand and leads her forth from the palace, quivering with fear. And so they leave the halls of Circe.

This is the laſt we hear of Circe from Apollonius, who is obviously not intereſted in her, and introduces her merely for the part she plays in the Medea ſtory.

Ovid gives us two more pictures of Circe, in both of which her predilection for transforming her victims into other shapes is well illuſtrated. In the firſt picture[1] we see her in love with Glaucus, the fisherman, who,

[1] Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 12 *sqq.*

having been repulsed by Scylla, a sea-nymph, whom he loved, comes to Circe for help.

"O goddess,"[1] he prays, "pity a god, I pray you! for you alone, if I but seem worthy of it, can help this love of mine. What magic potency herbs have, O Titaness, no one knows better than myself, for I was changed by them.[2] . . . Do you, if there is any power in charms, sing a charm with your sacred lips; or if herbs are more effectual, use the tried strength of efficacious herbs."

Circe replies by telling him of her newly kindled love for him, and implores him to give up Scylla in her favour, and devote himself to her. When Glaucus answers that nothing can change his love for Scylla, Circe becomes enraged, and since she cannot (and would not if she could) harm the god himself, she turns her wrath upon her rival.

"She straightway bruised together uncanny herbs with juices of dreadful power, singing while she mixed them Hecate's own charms. Then, donning an azure cloak, she took her way from her palace through the throng of beasts that fawned upon her as she passed, and made for Rhegium. She fared along the seething waters on which she trod as on the solid ground, skimming dry-shod the surface of the sea. There was a little pool, curving into a deep bow, a peaceful place where Scylla loved to come. Thither would she betake herself from the heat of sea and sky. . . . This pool, before the maiden's coming, the goddess tinctures and befouls with her baleful poisons. When these had been poured out, she sprinkles liquors brewed from noxious roots, and a charm, dark with its maze of uncanny words, thrice nine

[1] Translated by F. J. Miller (Loeb Classical Library). [2] *Cf.* p. 76.

times she murmurs over with lips well skilled in magic. Then Scylla comes and wades waist-deep into the water; when all at once she sees her loins disfigured with barking monster shapes. And at first not believing that these are parts of her own body, she flees in fear and tries to drive away the boisterous barking things. But what she flees, she takes along with her; and feeling for her thighs, her legs and her feet, she finds in place of these only gaping dogs."

Yet even so Circe does not destroy Glaucus' love for Scylla, for he flees from the baleful goddess, bewailing his loss, while the unhappy Scylla, now a raving monster, takes vengeance upon Circe by depriving Odysseus, Circe's favourite, of his companions.

The other picture[1] is again a story of one of Circe's love affairs. This time it is to Picus, son of Saturn, and King of Latium, that she gives her heart. Picus was wooed by all the nymphs, dryads and naiads of the surrounding countryside, but singled out one nymph, Canens, on whom to bestow his love. Canens was the daughter of Janus and Venilia, and was named from the beauty of her voice, which was even more wondrous than the beauty of her face, for, like Orpheus, she could move forests and stones with her song, tame wild beasts, and stay the course of rapid rivers.

One day, however, Picus went forth to hunt, and it chanced that Circe, weary of her own hills, came to the same wood in search of new flowers. Hidden by the trees she saw the young King in his gold and purple cloak, and straightway the flame of love leapt in her heart, the flowers fell from her hand, and she sought to

[1] Ovid, *Met.*, xiv. 320 *sqq.*

approach him. Picus, however, rode on, heedless of her coming, and his attendants pressed around him, and held her back. Then Circe's anger was roused, and she exclaimed: "Thou shalt not escape me thus, not though the winds bear thee off. I know myself, if the power of my magic herbs is not wholly gone, and my charms fail me not." Even as she spoke, she fashioned the phantom of a wild boar, and bade it rush in front of the King's eyes, to take cover in the thicket, where no horse could enter. Picus dashed after the shadowy prey, left his steed, and followed the chase on foot. Circe, meantime, muttered prayers and incantations, calling on unknown gods, such as she used in dimming the moon's white face and hiding her father's[1] head in clouds. So at her magic songs the heavens were darkened and thick mists rose from the ground. The King's attendants had lost sight of their royal master, and sought for him far away in the fog. At last Circe essayed speech, and pleaded with Picus for his love, but he roughly repelled her, asserting himself the thrall of another's love. Then Circe again bethought her of vengeance. Twice she turned to the west, twice to the east; thrice did she touch Picus with her magic wand, thrice repeated her charms. He turned to flee, but found himself running more swiftly than his wont, and saw wings sprouting from his shoulders. In his rage he struck the oak trees with his mouth, now a hard beak, wounding the long branches. The purple of his cloak had turned to purple plumage, while a crescent of gold feathers encircled his neck; he retained nothing of himself except his name.[2]

[1] The Sun was her father.

[2] *Picus* is the Latin name for the woodpecker.

Meantime the attendants at last found Circe, charged her openly with the crime, and attacked her with their deadly spears. But she sprinkled them with her baleful drugs and poisonous juices, calling to her aid Night and the gods of Night from Erebus and Chaos, and invoking Hecate with magic cries. The woods leapt from their place, the earth groaned, the trees grew white, the grass where her poison fell was stained with drops of blood. The very stones seemed to howl, the baying o hounds was heard, and the ground was black with crawling things. Everywhere ghosts of the dead flitted among the trees. The crowd stood panic-stricken; but Circe touched their frightened faces with her wand, and at the touch horrible, beastlike shapes came upon the young men, nor did one retain his proper form. Canens, the unhappy nymph, after searching six days through the woodland for her husband, pined away with grief, and vanished into the fleeting breezes.

Such, then, are the stories of Circe; but they leave no thrill behind them, as do the Medea legends. Her witchcraft is far less advanced; her motives entirely selfish and lustful. Yet, even so, she is still the flaming daughter of the Sun, a brilliant thing of crude yellows and scarlets, unrelieved by the softer and richer touches of Medea's purples and crimsons, flashing through the pages of Homer, Apollonius and Ovid, dazzling, mysterious, and cruel, with her magic palaces, her singing, her herbs and incantations, and her horrible menageries.

Simætha

Theocritus, in his second Idyll, gives us a dramatic little monologue by Simætha, a Coan maiden, who seeks to put a fire-spell on her faithless lover, Delphis, who has deserted her for twelve days. Simætha, however, is no professional witch, but the merest amateur; she tries in turn all the magic rites she has ever heard of, and in the end declares that her spells are useless, and resigns herself to her fate.

The scene is probably laid in the open air, according to Andrew Lang in a garden near the town and within sound of the sea. The moon shines in the background, and Simætha would naturally perform her ceremonies at a shrine or altar of Hecate. She seeks the help of her slave-girl, Thestylis, whom she bids fetch bay-leaves, love charms and crimson wool[1] with which to wreathe the bowl containing the leaves. As she invokes Hecate, she whirls a wryneck,[2] or magic wheel, to the refrain:

ἴυγξ, ἕλκε τὸ τῆνον ἐμὸν ποτὶ δῶμα τὸν ἄνδρα,

which recurs after every few lines through the first section of the Idyll. Then she calls for barley-meal,[3] and bids Thestylis throw it on the fire, saying "These be Delphis' bones that I throw."[4] When the crackling[5] of

[1] Crimson was the colour usually associated with magic rites.

[2] *Vide infra*, p. 35.

[3] *Cf.* Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 84.

[4] The idea is that the pain which Delphis has brought her will recoil upon him, through the medium of the burning bay-leaves.

[5] The crackling of the bay-leaves was a good omen. *Cf.* Tibull., ii. 5, 81, *sq.*:

"Et succensa sacris crepitet bene laurea flammis
Omine quo felix et sacer annus erit."

Abt(on Apul., *Apol.*, 30) quotes from *The Sword of Moses* (ed. Gaster,

the leaves has died down she thrusts into the flames a waxen image of her lover which she has prepared beforehand, saying: "As this puppet melts for me before Hecate, so may Delphis as speedily melt with love, and as this brazen wheel turns by grace of Aphrodite, so may Delphis turn again before my threshold."

As she flings bran into the flames, with prayers to Artemis, she hears the howling of dogs in the town heralding the approach of the goddess;[1] the waves and the winds are hushed: Hecate is at the cross-roads. Three times Simætha pours libation, adding the herb hippomanes.[2] Next she produces a fragment of Delphis' cloak and flings it on the flames, muttering a threat that on the morrow she will pound a lizard into a potion.[3] Then she gathers up the remnants[4] and bids Thestylis take them, and, while it is still dark, smear them on Delphis' lintel, spitting[5] as she does so, and saying: "I smear Delphis' bones."

She ends by saying: "To-night my fire-philtres shall put

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p. 189, 128): "To make another forget what he has learnt write (then follows a sacred name) in his name on laurel leaves, and burn them under his lintel." *Vide* Apul., *Apol.*, *loc. cit.*, ed. by H. E. Butler.

[1] *Cf.* Virg., *Æn.*, vi. 257.

[2] *Vide infra*, p. 28.

[3] The lizard was used by some witches (*Cf.* Apul., *Apol.*, 30, quoting Lævius, "*sauræ inlices bicodulæ*"), but the *rubeta* (toad) was more often used in poison charms. *Cf.* Juv., i. 69; Propertius, iii. 6, 27; and *Macbeth*, IV. i.

[4] τὰ θρόνα: θρόνα originally meant flowers embroidered on cloth (*vide* Liddell and Scott), but later came to be used for the flowers or herbs used as drugs or charms. The word in the above passage from Theocritus is variously translated as drugs or ashes, but it evidently refers to what is left of the potion Simætha has been brewing.

[5] The spitting was for the purpose of self-preservation from the effects of the charm. *Vide infra* p. 31, and *cf.* Theoc., *Id.*, vi. 39.

a spell on him, but if they bring not an end to my trouble, I have evil medicines in my chest. . . . Farewell, great Lady, I will bear my love as best I may."

Alphesibœus' Sorceress

Virgil, in his eighth Eclogue, which is modelled directly on Theocritus' second Idyll, also gives us an account of the charms used by a deserted maiden to bring back her faithless lover, Daphnis. Although the speakers in the dialogue are both shepherd lads, Alphesibœus, in telling the story, uses the first person, as though impersonating the character of the unhappy girl.

"Fetch water forth,"[1] he sings, "and twine the altars here with the soft fillet, and burn resinous twigs and male frankincense, that I may try by magic rites to turn my lover's sense from sanity: nothing is wanting now but the songs."

Just as in the Theocritean Idyll a refrain runs through the monologue, so in the Eclogue, Alphesibœus repeats after every few lines:

"Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnin."

"Songs," he continues, "have might even to draw down the moon from heaven: with songs Circe transformed the crew of Ulysses: by singing the cold snake is burst asunder in the meadows.[2] Threefold first I twine about thee these triple-hued[3] threads, and thrice about these altars I draw thine image: an odd number is the god's

[1] Virg., *Ecl.*, viii. 65, translated by J. W. Mackail.
[2] *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, vii. 203.
[3] According to Servius the triple hues are white, rose-red and black.

delight. Tie the threefold colours in three knots, Amaryllis, but tie them: and say: 'I tie Venus' bands.' As this clay[1] stiffens and as this wax softens in one and the self-same fire, so let Daphnis do for love of me. Sprinkle barley-meal, and kindle the brittle bay twigs with bitumen. Cruel Daphnis burns me: I burn this bay at Daphnis. . . . This dress[2] he wore of old the traitor left me, dear pledges of himself: which now I even in the doorway, O earth, commit to thee: for these pledges Daphnis is in debt. These herbs and these poisons gathered in the Pontus,[3] Mœris[4] himself gave me; in Pontus they grow thickest. By their might I have often seen Mœris become a wolf[5] and plunge into the forest, often seen him call up souls from their deep graves, and transplant the harvests to where they were not sown. Fetch ashes, Amaryllis, out-of-doors, and fling them across thy head into the running brook: and look not back.[6] With these I will assail Daphnis: nothing cares he for gods, nothing for songs. See! the embers on the altar have caught, with a flickering flame, themselves of their own accord, while I delay to fetch them. Be it for good! something there is for sure; and Hylax[7] barks in the doorway. May we believe? or do we lovers fashion dreams of our own? Forbear: from the city, forbear now, my songs, Daphnis comes."

[1] "The commentators explain *limus* and *cera* of images of clay and wax; but Keightley rightly denies that anything more is meant than pieces of clay and wax which are put into the fire like the sprigs of bay, the 'mola' and the bitumen" (Conington).
[2] *Cf.* Theoc., *Id.*, ii. 53, and Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 495.
[3] Pontus possibly stands for Colchis, Medea's country, but it had a reputation of its own for poisons, in connection with Mithridates.
[4] A wizard of the countryside. [5] *Cf.* p. 44. [6] *Cf.* p. 14.
[7] *Hylax* is the Greek word for "barker," and means here simply the dog.

Canidia

Horace's pictures[1] of Canidia deal with a more professional type of witch than we find in Theocritus or Virgil. She has become enamoured of the aged Varus, and prepares a charm with which to win his love. She first procures a young boy, and, despite his piteous cries for mercy, removes the *bulla*—the golden amulet worn in childhood—then, with hair streaming and garlanded with small snakes, she bids her attendants bring wild fig trees uprooted from the tombs,[2] funereal cypresses,[3] the eggs and feathers of a screech-owl smeared with the blood of a foul toad,[4] herbs from Iolchos[5] and Hiberia,[6] and bones snatched from a hungry dog. All these are to be burnt in the witches' flames. Sagana, another witch, sprinkles the house with water from Avernus,[7] while Veia, a third, scoops out of the ground a hole where the boy may be buried and die a slow and painful death. Food is to be placed in front of him, and changed two or three times a day, in order that, when he is dead, the marrow and liver may be removed, when they are dried, to make the love-philtre, so soon as his eye-balls have become glazed in death. Folia, a fourth witch, is said by Horace to have assisted in the rites, Folia who by her magic incantations can charm stars

[1] *Epodes* v. and xvii., and *Sat.*, I. viii.
[2] *Cf.* Juv., x. 145.
[3] *Cf.* Hor., *Od.*, ii. 14, 23.
[4] *Cf.* Ovid, *Met.*, vii. Shakespeare's witches' brew consisted of toad toe of frog and owlet's wing (*Macbeth*, IV. i.).
[5] Iolchos in Thessaly, land of magic. *Cf.* Hor., *Od.*, I. xxvii., 21.
[6] Hiberia in Pontus = Colchis, land of Medea.
[7] Water from Avernus was the opposite of holy water. *Cf.* Virg., *Æn.*, iv. 512.

and moon down from the sky. Canidia, meantime, gnawing her long, claw-like nails, invokes Night and Diana[1] to come to her aid, and bring Varus to her doors. But she breaks off in the middle to ask why her spells have failed. "What has happened?" she cries, "why fail the dread sorceries of barbarian Medea? Surely I have forgotten no herb, no root? His bed has been smeared with a charm which brings forgetfulness of all other loves. Ah! I have it! He is freed by the spell of some witch of greater cunning. No ordinary philtre will restore thee to me, Varus, nor can I regain thy heart by Marsian[2] spells. I have a more powerful plan and more potent cup against thy haughtiness; and sooner shall heaven sink beneath the sea, and earth be spread above it, than that thou shouldst not burn with love for me, as the pitch in yonder smoky flame."[3] At this the boy breaks out into Thyestean curses, declaring that though witchcraft might be more potent than right and wrong, it could never prevail against revenge, for when once a curse is pronounced, no victim can make atonement. He will meet the witches like a night Fury, and claw their faces with his talons; he will rob them of sleep; the mob shall stone them through the streets; till finally the jackals and birds of prey will tear their unburied limbs asunder.

The Epode ends at this point, without any indication of the ultimate fate of the boy, or the final result of the philtre. "The scholiast," says Page,[4] "says that Canidia was really called Gratidia, and was an old 'flame' of

[1] Hecate's name on earth.

[2] The Marsi were a tribe of Latium famed as wizards and snake-charmers.

[3] Translated by E. C. Wickham.

[4] Introductory note to *Epode* V., by T. E. Page.

Horace's. Such guesses seem futile, and this Epode is only an immature attempt to depict one of those scenes of magic which were popular with ancient readers."

Canidia appears again in the seventeenth Epode, which is written in the form of a dialogue between Horace and the witch. "I yield," says Horace; "be pitiful and cease thy spells and whirling wheel, even as Achilles had pity on Telephus and Priam, and Circe on the comrades of Ulysses. I have suffered and still suffer torture enough from your magic perfumes. No rest gives me respite from my pain. I am constrained to believe to my cost what I denied, that Sabellian charms can ring through and through the heart, and Marsian[1] incantations make the head burst asunder. You are a laboratory of magic drugs whose fires will not slacken till I am burnt to ashes for the winds to scatter in their rough play. I am ready to offer expiation if you shall ask a hecatomb, or desire that I shall tune my lyre to falsehood and sing of you." And Canidia answers: "Why pour your prayers to sealed ears? To think that with impunity you should have divulged and mocked the rites of Cotytto,[2] and the mysteries of free love, and after playing the high priest at my magic rites[3] on the Esquiline should have made me the talk of the town! What profit should I have then for having made the fortune of Pelignian hags and brewed a poison bowl of quicker powers? But the fate that awaits you is slower than you would pray for. . . . What, though I can make waxen images fall, as you

[1] Witches were numerous among the mountain tribes.

[2] "Cotytto is some Thracian goddess whose mysteries were celebrated in connection with licentious orgies" (Page).

[3] For her magic practices on the Esquiline, *vide infra*, p. 104.

know through your prying, and can snatch the moon from the sky by my spells, can call up the dead from their urns and brew a philtre of desire, must I mourn the issue of an art powerless against you?"[1]

The last picture of Canidia is given us in the Satires.[2] "The scene is the 'Campus Esquilinus,' on a site outside the 'agger' of Servius Tullius, where there had recently been a large burial-place for the lowest class of the people. Mæcenas had lately bought it and laid it out as gardens, but the transformation seems scarcely complete. There are still 'sepulchral mounds' and bones to be found by scratching the ground, and it is haunted by witches. The speaker throughout the Satire is a rough wooden image of Priapus, the god of gardens, which in the utilitarian spirit of Roman religion serves in part as a scarecrow. . . . 'For myself,' he says, 'my annoyance and trouble now is not so much the thieves and jackals which used to infest the place, as the witches who with spells and sorceries torment human souls—these I cannot make an end of or stay them in any manner, so soon as the moon on her travels has lifted her fair face above the horizon, from gathering bones and herbs of harm. With my own eyes I have seen Canidia come with black mantle girt high, with bare feet and streaming hair, howling in concert with Sagana, greater than herself, each of them terrible to look on. First they dug the ground with their nails and tore a black ewe-lamb to pieces with their teeth; the blood was collected in a trench that thereby they might draw the spirits of the dead souls to give oracular answer. Then there was an

[1] Slightly altered and abridged from E. C. Wickham's translation.
[2] *Vide Sat.*, i. 8.

effigy of wool,[1] another of wax; the one of wool the larger, that it might hold the weaker in durance and punishment, the waxen one standing in suppliant attitude as expecting sentence to a slave's death. One witch calls on Hecate; the other on fell Tisiphone. You might see serpents and hell-hounds moving about, and the blushing moon that she might not witness such sights hiding behind the huge sepulchral mounds. Need I tell each detail—how sad and shrill sounded the voices of the shades in dialogue with Sagana—how they buried stealthily in the ground a wolf's beard and the tooth of a spotted snake—how the waxen image made fire blaze higher—and how I avenged myself for being the shuddering witness of the words and deeds of the two Furies? With a noise as of a burst bladder my buttock of fig-wood split with a pop, and off they scurried into the town. You might see Canidia drop her teeth and Sagana her tall wig, and the herbs and the charmed love-knots[2] from their arms; and great was the laughter and the mirth.' "[3]

[1] "The image of wool is Canidia: the waxen one is that of the man whom she proposes to torture for his falseness to her witch-charms" (Page).

[2] Love-knots: "*vincula* is generally taken as *licia*, the magic threads which were tied to the rhombus, the witches' wheel. But as the witches carried these *vincula* on their arms, and as there is no mention of a rhombus in the satire, perhaps it is better to suppose a sort of magic bracelets or armlets: 'love-knots' " (Page). Apuleius speaks of *licia discolora* and quoting from Lævius, of *tæniæ*, ribbands, being used for magical purposes (*Apol.*, 30).

In the *Demotic Magical Papyrus* (col. iv. (33), p. 39, Griffith and Thompson) we read: "You take a band of linen of sixteen threads, four of white, four of (green), four of blue, four of red, and make them into one band, and stain them with the blood of a hoopoe, and you bind it with a scarab in its attitude of the sun-god, drowned, being wrapped in byssus, and you bind it to the body of the boy who has the vessel, and it will work magic quickly."

[3] E. C. Wickham's introduction and translation.

Erichtho

The most detailed account that has come down to us of the use of magic is that given us by Lucan in the sixth book of the *Pharsalia*,[1] where he describes the manner in which Sextus Pompeius, the younger son of Gnæus Pompeius, is supposed to seek aid from Erichtho, one of the witches who still frequented Thessaly at that time. Lucan tells us that Sextus has gained a knowledge of magic and the secrets of the art, and coming to the conclusion that the gods above knew too little, thinks to have recourse to those below. It happens, also, conveniently for his purpose, that his army is stationed in Thessaly, the land of all others infested by sorceresses, and that close to his camp is a witch of some renown. Erichtho, a foul creature who is refused a dwelling in the city, haunts the tombs and deserted funeral pyres. She knows how to take counsel with the dead, she knows the Stygian realms and the secrets of Pluto. She is a lean, filthy old woman, of horrible visage, deathly pale, with dishevelled, uncombed locks. On nights of cloud and storm she leaves the robbed pyres and tries to arrest the lightnings of the sky. Everywhere she treads the seeds of corn wither away, and her breath befouls the air. She offers no prayers to gods above, nor consults entrails in augury; but her delight is to burn incense and kindle funereal flames on the altars. She buries in the tomb souls still alive; while dead bodies she snatches from their sepulchres so soon as the funeral procession has gone its way. Burning bones and smoking ashes she

[1] Luc., *Phars.*, vi. 507 *sqq.*

seizes from the pyres, and the very torch held but a moment since by the parents; she collects, too, fragments of the funeral bier that fly in the black smoke, and the flowing robes amid the ashes and embers reeking of limbs. Sometimes the bodies are left embalmed, all the moisture being drawn off, then she ravens greedily upon the limbs, scoops out the withered eye-balls, and gnaws the white nails of the shrunken hand. She tears asunder with her teeth halter and ropes of bodies that have been hanged; she unnails others from their crosses, and rends their entrails and parched marrow piecemeal. Corruption and decay she bears off triumphantly; bodies, too, she snatches from the ground, forestalling the birds of prey, though she allows wolves to rend the corpses for her with their teeth. She holds not back from murder if she desires living blood, but draws it off from the throat she has slit, or snatches forth the entrails and lays them on the glowing altars. Should she need the help of ghosts, she raises spirits from the dead; no form of death is beyond her ken. With her left hand[1] she tears down from the youthful cheeks or cuts off locks from the hair of the dying; or she broods over the limbs of her kinsmen, seated by the pyre, and after kissing them, cuts off the head and rends the cheeks with her teeth, biting off the end of the tongue as it cleaves to the dried throat. Then she murmurs into the cold lips and sends it to the shades below with dread secrets in its keeping. Rumours of this foul witch are brought to Pompeius' notice, and his comrades mark her wandering amid the tombs and graves, or sitting on a high crag, where

[1] The left hand was especially employed in magical rites (*cf.* thieves' use of the left hand).

Mount Henna slopes down to Pharsalia. They watch her conning spells unknown even to the gods of magic, and experimenting with charms for ſtrange purposes; she caſts spells over the land that the theatre of war may not shift its ſtage, and so deprive her of death and slaughter and mangled bodies without limit. Her one aim is to secure the corpse of Pompeius Magnus, or Cæsar's limbs to brood over.

Sextus determines to seek her out, and finally approaches her with flattering words as to her wide-spread fame, beseeching her to unlock the Elysian abodes and call forth Death himself, and conſtrain him to reveal what she demands. The witch, flattered by this mention of her reputation, answers:

> "If some lesser fates
> Thy wish had been to change, againſt their wish
> It had been easy to compel the gods
> To its accomplishment. My art has power
> When of one man the conſtellations press
> The speedy death, to compass a delay;
> And mine it is, though every ſtar decrees
> A ripe old age, by myſtic herbs to shear
> The life midway. But should some purpose set
> From the beginning of the universe,
> And all the labouring fortunes of mankind
> Be brought in queſtion, then Thessalian art
> Bows to the power supreme. But if thou be
> Content to know the issue preordained,
> Simple the task and plain; for earth and air
> And sea and space[1] and Rhodopeian crags
> Shall speak the future. Yet it easieſt seems
> Where death in these Thessalian fields abounds

[1] Space = chaos = Tartarus here, the place of departed spirits. "Erichtho enumerates the different classes of magic: geometry, aeromancy, necromancy, hydromancy, and prophecy from the inspection of entrails."

> To raise a single corpse. From dead men's lips
> Scarce cold, in fuller accents falls the voice;
> Not from some mummied frame in accents shrill,
> Uncertain to the ear."[1]

Thus she speaks, and redoubling the shades of Night, wraps her dread head in a thick cloud, and wanders among the bodies of the unburied dead.[2]

The wolves take to flight and the birds fly unfed while Erichtho selects her prophet, searching for a body in which the lungs are unwounded. At last she finds one with pierced throat, and she drags the corpse by a hook over the rocks and stones, and places it beneath the lofty crags of a hollowed mountain, which she has chosen as the site for her magic rites. In a wood whose gloom is never relieved except by spells and incantations, she puts on a many-coloured dress, pushes back her hair so as to reveal her face, and wreathes her head with vipers. She takes the corpse, opens the breast, and fills the wounds with reeking blood; she bathes the marrow with gore, and adds venom from the moon, the foam of a mad dog, the entrails of a lynx, the spine of a hyæna, the marrow of a stag that has fed upon snakes,[3] a sucking fish, the eyes of a dragon,[4] echoing stones that are warmed beneath the brooding bird,[5] the winged serpent of the Arabians, the viper produced in the Red Sea, the

[1] Lucan, vi. 605 *sqq.*, translated by Sir Edward Ridley.

[2] Lucan disregards the fact that the battle has not yet taken place.

[3] It was a primitive belief that deer in old age could draw forth, by their breath, snakes from their holes. They killed the snakes with their horns and ate them, thereby regaining their youth.

[4] Another belief was that those whose eyes had been anointed with a mixture of serpents' eyes beaten up with honey were proof against apparitions by night.

[5] The *aëtites*, or eagle stone, was found in an eagle's nest. The eagle would sit on these stones, causing them to explode with a loud noise.

guardian of the precious shell,[1] the slough of the horned serpent of Libya, and the ashes of a phœnix taken from an eastern altar. She mixes also all kinds of nameless horrors, and adds leaves steeped in dread spells, herbs on which she had spat as they shot up, and some special poisons of her own. Then she begins to chant in a voice more powerful than any drugs to charm the gods below, a voice murmuring, and discordant, and inhuman, like the bark of a dog, the howl of a wolf, the screech of an owl, the yell of a wild beast, the hiss of a snake, the moaning of waters on the rocks, and the roar of thunder in the woods:

"Ye awful goddesses, avenging power
Of Hell upon the damned, and Chaos huge
Who striv'st to mix innumerable worlds,
And Pluto, King of earth, whose weary soul
Grieves at his godhead; Styx; and plains of bliss
We may not enter: and thou, Proserpine,
Hating thy mother and the skies above,
My patron goddess, last and lowest form
Of Hecate through whom the shades and I
Hold silent converse; warder of the gate
Who casteſt human offal to the dog:
Ye sisters who shall spin the threads again;
And thou, O boatman of the burning wave,
Now wearied of the shades from hell to me
Returning, hear me if with voice I cry
Abhorred, polluted; if the flesh of man
Hath ne'er been absent from my proffered song,
Flesh washed with brains still quivering; if the child
Whose severed head I placed upon the dish
But for this hand had lived—a listening ear
Lend to my supplication! From the caves
Hid in the innermost recess of hell
I claim no soul long banished from the light.
For one but now departed, lingering still

[1] It was believed that there were serpents upon the shores of the Red Sea that watched the shells of those oysters which contained pearls.

Upon the brink of Orcus is my prayer.
Grant (for ye may) that listening to the spell
Once more he seek his dust; and let the shade
Of this our soldier perished (if the war
Well at your hands has merited), proclaim
The destiny of Magnus to his son."[1]

Then, raising her head and foaming mouth, she beholds the ghost of the corpse standing beside her, yet fearing to enter once more into its former prison-house of the body. Erichtho, enraged at the delay, beats the body with her snakes, and again breaks into song:

"Tisiphone, Megæra, heed ye not?
Flies not this wretched soul before your whips
The void of Erebus? By your very names,
She-dogs of hell, I'll call you to the day
Not to return; through sepulchres and death
Your gaoler: from funereal urns and tombs
I'll chase you forth. And thou, too, Hecate,
Who to the gods in comely shape and mien,
Not that of Erebus, appear'st, henceforth
Wasted and pallid as thou art in hell
At my command shall come. I'll noise abroad
The banquet that beneath the solid earth
Holds thee, thou maid of Enna; by what bond
Thou lov'st Night's King, by what mysterious stain
Infected, so that Ceres fears from hell
To call her daughter. And for thee, base king,
Titan shall pierce thy caverns with his rays
And sudden day shall smite thee. Do ye hear?
Or shall I summon to mine aid that god
At whose dread name earth trembles;[2] who can look
Unflinching on the Gorgon's head, and drive
The Furies with his scourge, who holds the depths
Ye cannot fathom, and above whose haunts
Ye dwell supernal; who by waves of Styx
Forswears himself unpunished?"[3]

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[1] Lucan, vi. 695 *sqq.*, translated by E. Ridley.
[2] Demogorgon, *vide* p. 65.
[3] Lucan, vi. 730 *sqq.*

At this the clotted blood begins to grow warm, and spread through the body; the limbs begin to tremble, the nerves to throb, and gradually the body raises itself from the ground, with opened eyes, yet still retaining the ghastly hue of death.

" 'Speak,' quoth the hag,
'As I shall bid thee; great shall be thy gain
If thou but answer truly, freed for aye
From all Hæmonian art. Such burial place
Shall now be thine, and on thy funeral pyre
Such fatal woods shall burn, and chant shall sound,
That to thy ghost no more or magic song
Or spell shall reach, and thy Lethæan sleep
Shall never more be broken in a death
From me received anew: for such reward
Then speak, I pray thee. Let the hidden fates
Tell through thy voice the mysteries to come.
Think not this second life enforced in vain.
Obscure may be the answers of the gods
By priestess spoken at the holy shrine;
But whoso braves the oracles of death
In search of truth should gain a sure response.' "[1]

In addition to these words she adds some charm by which the ghost might answer with sure knowledge. Then, his eyes streaming with tears, he recites the scenes he has witnessed in Tartarus; and recounts stories of the great Romans, from the Decii down to the Gracchi, whom he has seen. Then he adds:

" 'But take with thee
This comfort, youth, that there a calm abode,
And peaceful, waits thy father and his house.
Nor let the glory of a little span
Disturb thy boding heart: the hour shall come
When all the chiefs shall meet. Shrink not from death. . .
Which of the chiefs by Tiber's yellow stream,

[1] *Ibid.*, 762 *sqq.*

And which by Nile shall rest (the leader's fate)
This fate decides, no more. Nor seek to know
From me thy fortunes: for the fates in time
Shall give thee all thy due; and thy great sire,
A surer prophet, in Sicilian fields
Shall speak thy future—doubting even he
What regions of the world thou should'st avoid
And what should'st seek. O miserable race!
Europe and Asia and Libya's plains,
Who saw your conquests, now shall hold alike
Your burial place—nor has earth for you
A happier land than this.' "[1]

When he has thus revealed the Fates, the shade stands gloomy and silent, dumbly begging for death. Magic incantations and herbs are necessary to restore the spirit once more to its proper home, and Erichtho builds a pyre, heaping high the wood, whereon the dead man lays himself. There the witch leaves him to the flames, and escorts Sextus back again to his father's tent.

Pamphile

Apuleius of Madaura, a town in the Roman province of Africa, was himself brought to trial on the charge of having married his wife, Pudentilla, by magical means, and may therefore be considered to be cognisant of all the approved tricks of the trade of witchcraft. He has left us one or two useful pictures of witches in his *Metamorphoses*, better known as "The Golden Ass," a book which has enjoyed an amazing popularity, and been translated into nearly every modern language.
The hero of the book, Lucius, has been identified with the author himself, whose full name is said to have been

[1] *Ibid.*, 802 *sqq.*

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The hero of the book, Lucius, has been identified with the author himself, whose full name is said to have been

[1] *Ibid.*, 802 *sqq.*

Lucius Saturninus Apuleius, although no contemporary evidence can be brought forward in support of the *prænomen*. Lucius is travelling in Thessaly, chiefly because he is interested in witchcraft and Thessaly is the land of witches, and stays with a certain Milo at a town named Hypata. Here he professes to be alarmed by the snares of the magical arts which none may escape, since witches are for ever hovering round the tombs and funeral pyres of the dead, ready to snatch fragments from the corpses with which to cast spells over the living. He is further told that the witches have been known "to mutiliate people still alive in the most horrible fashion."

While he is staying with Milo, Lucius visits the house of a kinswoman of his, named Byrrena,[1] who warns him to be on his guard against Pamphile, the wife of the very Milo with whom he is lodging. Pamphile is said to be a witch of the first order, Byrrena continues, and knows all the incantations that are sung over the tombs of the dead. She can thrust down the moon into hell by merely breathing upon sticks and stones, while the moment she sets eyes on any handsome youth, she entangles him in the fetters of her passionate love. Those who do not return her affection are changed, in the twinkling of an eye, into stones and cattle and all kinds of beasts, while in some cases she removes them altogether from the earth.

Lucius, however, far from being perturbed by Byrrena's warnings, becomes all on fire with curiosity to be instructed by Pamphile in the mysteries of her art, and returns to Milo's house resolved to win the love of Fotis,

[1] Apul., *Met.*, ii. 5 *sqq.*

Pamphile's maid, that with her help he may have an opportunity of seeing magic at first hand. Fotis, when questioned, is at first afraid to disclose her mistress's secrets; but succumbing to Lucius' charms, she tells her lover all he wishes to know. In the meantime, however, Lucius is badly frightened by an affair in which he is the unconscious victim of Pamphile's arts. The lady of the house, it appears, is madly in love with a young Bœotian, who remains indifferent to her charms.[1] Passing through the town with Fotis, she chances to see the youth seated in a barber's shop, and bids her maid secretly carry off some of the hairs that have been shaved from his head, that she may use them for a spell by which to bring him to her door. Fotis, however, is prevented by the barber from carrying out these instructions, and fearing to return home empty-handed, carries off some yellow hairs, resembling the locks of the young Bœotian, from the clippings of some goat's-hide wine-skins.

Pamphile's laboratory consists of a wooden shelter on the roof, situated on the further side of the house, and exposed to the four winds of heaven. Hither she carries the yellow hairs at nightfall and proceeds to arrange her room as usual. She sets in readiness herbs of every kind, metal plates inscribed with unintelligible hieroglyphics, remnants of ill-omened birds, fragments snatched from corpses, noses and fingers, nails torn from the gibbet with the flesh still hanging to them, blood from dead bodies, and splintered skulls. First she chants a spell over some entrails that are still quivering; then she makes offerings of fresh spring water, milk and honey,

[1] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 16.

and pours libations of mead. Last of all she twists the locks of hair together, knotting them fast, and throws them, with some sweet-scented perfume, on to the glowing coals. Immediately the bodies, whose locks are smoking and crackling in the fire, assume human form and come rushing to the door. Lucius, who is returning home from a banquet, enters into a drunken brawl, slays these four bodies, and is arrested; but when the cloths which cover the supposed dead youths are removed, only four wine-skins are revealed, and Lucius, believing himself the victim of an unpleasant practical joke, returns home again.

A few days after this episode, Fotis informs her lover that Pamphile is purposing to transform herself into a bird, in order to fly to her beloved Bœotian, and that Lucius, as he is prudent and cautious, may be allowed to behold the marvel.

Accordingly, at nightfall,[1] Fotis conducts him to the laboratory door, and bids him watch through a chink. He sees Pamphile divest herself of her clothing, and then open a casket, from which she takes a number of small boxes. Removing the lid of one of them, she produces some ointment which she rubs well into the palms of her hands and then smears all over herself. Next, after holding long and mysterious converse with her magic lamp, she shakes herself with a quivering motion. As she sways backwards and forwards, soft feathers begin to sprout from her limbs, and wings from her back; her nose becomes hard and beaked, her nails curve into talons; Pamphile has become an owl! She emits a shrill cry and flies away into the night.

[1] Apul., *Met.*, iii. 21.

Lucius is transformed into an Ass

Lucius, trembling with excitement, implores Fotis to give him a little of the ointment, provided that he can doff his feathers and become himself again at will. Fotis replies that this is quite simple, as all he need do to return to human shape is to bathe in spring water with a little anise and laurel leaf mixed in it, and then drink some of the mixture. With this reassurance, Fotis creeps into her mistress's room and removes the little box from the casket. Lucius, after embracing Fotis, takes off his clothes and smears himself with the ointment; then he waves his arms in the air, like a bird. But to his horror his hair begins to turn coarse and bristly, his skin grows hard, his fingers disappear into a huge hoof, and, worst of all, a long tail sprouts from his back. His face grows huge, his mouth gapes, his nostrils distend, his lips droop; his ears become long and pointed and bristly. He is not a bird, but an ass!

Fotis, terror-stricken, shrieks out that she has given him the wrong ointment; but to transform himself to human shape he need only nibble some roses.

It is, however, long before the unfortunate Lucius manages to become himself again, and not until he has prayed to the goddess Isis that he may be delivered from his ass's body.[1] She promises that salvation is at hand, and that a priest walking in a procession held in her honour will carry a crown of roses. She bids Lucius approach as though to kiss the priest's hand, and eat the roses.

"And now, Lo!" says Lucius, "the promised blessings of the mighty goddess drew near, and the priest approached bearing with him my destiny and my very sal-

[1] Apul., *Met.*, xi. 5.

vation. As the divine promise had foretold, in his right hand he held out the sistrum of the goddess decked with flowers and proffered me the crown of roses. . . . Then I, quivering with apprehension, my heart pulsing wildly, with greedy mouth seized the crown that shone bright with sweet inwoven roses, and, longing for the fulfilment of the promise, devoured it. Nor did the heavenly promise fail me: promptly the bestial form fell from me. First the rough hair was shed away, then the thick hide grew thin, the fat paunch subsided, my feet came forth through the hoofs and ended in toes once more, my hands were feet no longer. . . . my long neck shrank, my face and head became round, my huge ears recovered their slenderness of old. My stony grinders became tiny human teeth once more, and my tail—my chiefest torment—disappeared."[1]

Other Witches

Ovid, besides his detailed description of Medea and Circe, gives us here and there a passing picture of a witch or of some magical practice. He describes,[2] in a joking manner, what he calls the sacred rites of Tacita, performed by an old hag. Tacita was the deity who presided over silence, and who averted and suppressed evil words, or words of ill omen. She was worshipped also under the names of Mania, Muta and Lara. Numa is said to have held her in especial reverence. Neapolis, an ancient commentator, thinks that these rites in her

[1] Translated by H. E. Butler.
[2] *Fast.*, ii. 571 *sqq.*

honour accompanied the Feralia as expressive of the maxim: "De mortuis nil nisi bonum." Ovid represents the old hag as sitting in the midst of a crowd of girls, muttering to herself, despite the honour due to the goddess of silence. With three fingers she puts three cloves of frankincense under the door where a little mouse has nibbled an entrance; then, after binding enchanted threads with the dark spindle, and turning over seven black beans in her mouth,[1] she roasts on the fire a head of a pilchard, sealed up with pitch and pierced with a brazen needle.[2] She pours drops of wine on to it, and herself consumes the greater part of what wine is left, the rest being given to her attendants. She goes off murmuring tipsily: "We have set a curb on evil tongues and inauspicious lips."

Dipsias is another old hag mentioned by Ovid[3] as being well skilled in magic rites and Circe's charms. She can turn rivers back to their source, and she is thoroughly well versed in the efficacy of herbs, whirling wheels, and the charm hippomanes. As she wills she can draw clouds across the sky, or sweep them from the heavens; she can make the stars drip with blood, or she can darken the moon's face. She can even fly, like a bird, amid the shades of the night. A double pupil gleams in her eye-ball, whence two lights shine forth. She calls forth ancestors from their tombs, and cleaves the ground with her incantations.

[1] *Cf. Fast.*, v. 436.

[2] "The bronze needle (*acus*) was a most important instrument in magic rites. *Cf. Amor.*, iii. 7, 30: 'Et medium tenues in iecur urget acus.' Sticking pins and needles in their victims was one of the charges brought against witches in quite recent times" (Paley).

[3] *Amor.*, i. 8.

Tibullus[1] gives us another very similar picture of a witch. "I have seen her,"[2] he says, "drawing stars from the sky. Her spells turn the course of the hurrying stream. Her chaunting cleaves the ground, lures the spirit from its tomb, and down from the warm pyre summons the bony frame. Now with magic shrillings she keeps the troops of the grave before her; now she sprinkles them with milk, and commands them to retreat. At will she chases the clouds from the frowning heavens; at will she musters the snow in the summer skies. Only she, men say, holds the secret of Medea's deadly herbs, only she hastens the wild hounds of Hecate. She framed me a charm to enable thee to deceive; chaunt it thrice and spit thrice when the spell is done. Then will he never trust anyone in aught that is said about us, nay, not even his own eyes if he sees us on the pillowed bed. Yet from all others thou must keep away; since all else will he perceive; only to me will he be blind. 'Why should I trust her?' Surely it was she, none other, said that by spells and herbs she could unbind my love. She cleansed me with the torch rite, and in the clear night a dusky victim fell to the gods of sorcery."

Apuleius, in addition to the detailed account he gives of the practices of the witch Pamphile, and the transformation of Lucius into an ass, also gives a description of a Thessalian witch named Meroë. We learn that she was a witch who could call down the sky, hang the earth in heaven, freeze up the fountains, melt the mountains, raise the spirits of the dead, send the gods to hell, put

[1] i. 2, 4.
[2] Translated by J. P. Postgate, Loeb Classical Library.

out the stars, and give light to Tartarus itself.[1] With a mere word she had once turned a lover who had deserted her into a wild beaver, and a neighbouring innkeeper, of whose successful trading she had reason to be jealous, into a frog, while she once transformed a lawyer into a ram.[2] So objectionable did she make herself that the people at last resolved that she should be stoned to death, but she brought the sentence to naught by her powerful incantations, and performed dark rites of cursing over a magic trench among the tombs, while she kept all the neighbours shut in their houses by the silent power of the nether gods, so that for two days the bolts could not be burst or the doors opened or the walls torn down. At last all solemnly swore that they would never lay hands on her or suffer anyone else to touch her, and thus propitiated she loosed the citizens from their imprisonment. "But as for him who had summoned the assembly that judged her, she transported him at dead of night with his whole house, walls, floor, foundations and all, locked and barred as it was, to another town a hundred miles away, situated on the top of a bare mountain and consequently ill-supplied with water. And since the site was so thickly crowded with the houses of the inhabitants as to leave no room for a newcomer, she dropped the house in front of the town gate and went upon her way."[3]

Aristomenes[4] is so overcome by his companion's account of Meroë, that he suggests going to bed early in

[1] Apul., *Met.*, i. 8.
[2] *Ibid.*, i. 9.
[3] *Ibid.*, i. 10, translated by H. E. Butler.
[4] Aristomenes is the travelling companion of Socrates, who has told him these tales of Meroe.

order to get away from the place as soon as possible the next morning. He shuts the door, draws the bolts, and places his bed across the hinges. At first he cannot sleep for fear, but he is just dozing off when the door is violently burst open, the hinges broken, and his bed overturned. Aristomenes is rolled upon the floor. Two women enter, one carrying a bright lantern, the other a sponge and a drawn sword. Thus armed they take their stand on either side of Socrates, Aristomenes' companion, who is sound asleep. The woman with the sword speaks first, saying: " 'This, sister Panthia, is my sweet Endymion, my Ganymede, who has made light of my love, and, not content with slandering me, now seeks to fly from me, while I, like a second Calypso, deserted by the wily Ulysses, must bewail my loneliness for ever.' " Then stretching out her hand she points to the unhappy Aristomenes on the floor, adding: " 'There is his good friend and counsellor Aristomenes. . . . In the fulness of time I'll make him rue his late saucy talk.' But Panthia interposed: 'Nay, sister Meroë, let us first tear this fellow limb from limb, like Bacchanals.' To this Meroë made answer, 'Yes, the other shall live, that there may be someone to give this poor wretch his burial in a shallow grave.' Then, pulling Socrates' head to one side, Meroë plunged the sword right up to the hilt into the left side of his throat and caught all the blood that streamed from it into a small bladder, which she applied to the wound so that not a drop could be seen anywhere. . . . Then Meroë plunged her hand through the wound into his very vitals, and after feeling about dragged out Socrates' heart. He meanwhile—for his gullet had been severed by the

violence of the blow—kept uttering a cry or rather a shriek that gurgled indistinctly through the wound as he gasped out his life's breath. Panthia then blocked the wound where it gaped widest with the sponge, saying 'Sponge, thou child of the sea, have a care that thou cross no running water.' "[1] With these words they left him. They had scarcely passed beyond the threshold when the doors rose from the ground and resumed their former position without a trace of injury. The hinges sank back on their sockets, the bars shot back into the door-posts, the bolts sprang back to their places in the cross-bars.

Aristomenes, fearing to be implicated in the murder of his friend, tries to hang himself, but the cord breaks and he falls with a crash on Socrates' bed, on top of his dead friend. At this Socrates suddenly returns to life as though awaking from sleep. Aristomenes, overjoyed at his friend's resurrection, hurried him away from the house. He can see no scar on Socrates' throat; but the latter admits that he dreamt during the night that he was being murdered and that he felt a sharp pain at his throat, while he thought his very heart was being torn out of his breast. They proceed on their journey, and breakfast by the wayside. Socrates, being thirsty, approaches a stream to drink. But as he kneels on the bank, bending over the water, a wound suddenly gapes in his throat, and a sponge falls out, followed by a thin trickle of blood. Socrates is dead in reality this time, and Aristomenes hastily buries him, and flies from the spot.

Another witch is mentioned, though not by name, by

[1] Translated by H. E. Butler.

Apuleius in his *Metamorphosis*.[1] He tells us that a miller's wife, having been expelled from the house by her husband, "sought out a certain cunning woman who was believed to be able to effect absolutely anything by means of her sorceries and magic curses, besieged her with many entreaties and loaded her with many gifts, begging her to do one of two things, either to appease her husband and reconcile him to her, or else, if that was impossible, to launch some goblin or fury upon him that should tear the life from him with violence. Thereupon the sorceress, whose power could compel even the gods to do her will, made play with the first weapon of her wicked art and strove to bend and constrain the heart of the grievously offended husband to love his wife once more. This attempt, however, met with less success than she expected. Wherefore she was filled with anger against her gods, and fired not only by the thought of the payment, but by the disdain which had mocked her efforts, began to threaten the hapless man's life, and evoking the spirit of a murdered woman urged her to slay him. . . . About midday a woman suddenly appeared in the mill. She was clad in the garb of mourning worn by persons accused of some crime; her face was strangely disfigured by grief, while her raiment hardly covered her, and consisted of deplorable shreds and patches. Her feet were naked and unshod, her countenance hideously thin, and pale as boxwood, and her grizzled hair was torn and foully besprinkled with ashes, and hung over her forehead so as to cover the greater part of her face. She laid her hand upon the miller as though she would speak to him in private, and

[1]Apul., *Met.*, ix. 29, translated by H. E. Butler.

led him to his chamber, where she remained for a long time within closed doors. When all the corn which had been delivered into the hands of the workmen was ground, and it became necessary to get more, the wretched slaves approached the bedchamber and called their master, demanding more grist for the mill. But though they cried long and loud, their master answered them not at all. So they began to beat upon the door with some violence. The care with which it was bolted excited their worst suspicions, and at last with great effort they wrenched back and broke the hinges and forced an entrance. Within they found no traces of the woman, but beheld their master hanging lifeless from a beam to which he was suspended."

From this survey of magic in Greek and Roman literature, it is clear that the latter people regarded it far more seriously than the former. This is, perhaps, surprising, since the Greeks had more imagination, sympathy and receptivity than the Romans: qualities which, at first sight, would seem to be essential for an effectual use of magic. The Greek temperament, however, was to a great extent self-sufficing, and did not need to have recourse to such extraneous means of satisfying spiritual wants as were provided by the black arts.
The Romans, on the other hand, combined, in a curious manner, the cold, calculating character of the Stoics with the quick passions and emotions typical of all southern people. It was at the meeting of these extremes that magic stepped in. Moreover, the religion of the Romans was never so sincere as that of the Greeks; their very gods were borrowed; they had no national

"Bible" such as the Greeks possessed in the Homeric poems; they eagerly deified the least vicious of their emperors. They lacked the Hellenic spontaneity and *joie de vivre*; and the underlying strain of despair in their character made them quickly responsive to superstitions and magical practices of every kind.

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